





Announcing  
a major new  
series

## KEY SOCIOLOGISTS

Series Editor: PETER HAMILTON

*Key Sociologists* is a new series that will present concise and readable texts covering the work, life, and influence of many of the most important sociologists, from the birth of the discipline to the present day. While each book will be accessible at an introductory level each author will take an individual and distinctive line in assessing the impact of sociology's major thinkers upon the development of the discipline.

### Marx and Marxism

PETER WORSLEY

Peter Worsley discusses the major varieties of Marxism, from the official ideology of the state in the Soviet Union and China, to its application in the West, where Marxism has taken root as the major theoretical critique of capitalist society. He distinguishes between those ideas that remain valid and those that are contestable, and he concentrates on the uses to which Marxism has been put, rather than treating it purely as a philosophy in the abstract.

128 pages  
Hardback: 0 85312 348 9: £8.50  
Paperback: 0 85312 375 6: £2.95

### Max Weber

FRANK PARKIN

The work and thought of Max Weber stand at the forefront of sociological scholarship. Frank Parkin engages directly with Weber's best known contributions to social and political theory. The analysis not only makes Weber's ideas accessible to those unfamiliar with them, but also makes an individual and highly compelling contribution to Weberian scholarship.

128 pages  
Hardback: 0 85312 393 4: £8.50  
Paperback: 0 85312 409 4: £2.95

### Emile Durkheim

KENNETH THOMPSON

Emile Durkheim is widely regarded as the key figure in the development of sociology from a diffuse social philosophy into an academic discipline. Kenneth Thompson provides a concise account of the major elements in Durkheim's sociology, discussing his profound impact on his contemporaries, and tracing his influence upon the later developments that provided sociology with its vital academic credibility.

180 pages  
Hardback: 0 85312 394 2: £8.50  
Paperback: 0 85312 419 2: £2.95

JAVISTOCK



Key Sociologists are published jointly by  
Javistock Publications Ltd and Ellis Horwood Ltd.  
All enquiries to Javistock Publications, 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 3EE.

## Social Relations and Human Attributes

PAUL HIRST AND PENNY WOOLLEY

*Social Relations and Human Attributes* suggests a rationale for the study of sociology that is not dependent on adherence to any one distinct theoretical approach. The focus of concern is how social relations organize and define human intellectual and bodily capacities. The themes and problems considered in this respect include the forms of interaction between biology and culture and the degree to which phenomena such as mental illness or sexual identification are universal or culturally variable in their character and form of expression.

312 pages, illustrated  
Hardback: 0 422 77220 8: £12.00  
Paperback: 0 422 77230 5: £4.95

## Biological Politics

Feminist and anti-feminist perspectives  
JANET SAYERS

In *Biological Politics* Janet Sayers discusses both anti-feminist and feminist perspectives on biological accounts of sex differences, providing a critical appraisal of on the one hand, the ways in which those opposed to changes in women's social role have sought to appropriate biology for their cause, and on the other, the various ways in which feminists conceptualize the relation between biology and the position of women in society.

240 pages  
Hardback: 0 422 77870 2: £10.95  
Paperback: 0 422 77880 X: £4.95

## Sex and Generation

A study of courtship and weddings  
DIANA LEONARD

*Sex and Generation* studies the lives of fifty young couples and their relationships with their parents and friends as they go through the process of courtship and marriage in a provincial town in South Wales. It focuses on the complex rituals associated with going steady, getting engaged, and getting up home, in order to throw light on some deeply held values about love and family life in our society.

326 pages  
Hardback: 0 422 78250 3: £8.50

JAVISTOCK



## THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

MARCH 26 1982

### contents

STEFAN COLLINI ONORA O'NEILL	John Stuart Mill: Autobiography and Literary Essays C. A. Wringer: Children's Rights - A Philosophical Study	331-32
ANDREW MOTION	William R. Evans (Editor): Robert Frost and Sidney Cox - Forty Years of Friendship Edward Connery Latham and Lawrence Thompson (Editors): Robert Frost - Farm-Poultryman	333
GEORGE WATSON	Richard Hoggart: An English Temper - Essays on Education, Culture and Communications	334
HERMIONE LEE CONNIE BENSLEY	John Batchelor: The Edwardian Novelists Deadlines (poem)	335
MICHAEL PODRO JONATHAN SUMPTION	Eugenio Battisti: Brunelleschi - The Complete Work Ian Dunlop: The Cathedrals' Crusade - The Rise of the Gothic Style in France Linda Seldel: Songs of Glory - The Romanesque Facades of Aquitaine	336
ALAN BORG	Tom Wolfe: From Bauhaus to Our House Paul Goldberger: The Skyscraper. The City Observed - New York	337-38
DAVID NOKES PETER KEMP DAVID PROFUMO T. J. BINYON	Fiction Peter Berresford Ellis: The Liberty Tree Robertson Davies: The Rebel Angels Fletcher Knebel: Crossing in Berlin Criminal Proceedings	339
LORNA SAGE MICHAEL MASON T. J. BINYON	Commentary The Priest of Love (Various Cinemas) Home Sweet Home (BBC TV) Guys and Dolls (Olivier Theatre)	340
	Children's books	341-52
JOHN HOPE MASON MICHAEL DUMMETT	Commentary The Assassins (Greenwich Theatre) Indian Playing Cards (Bethnal Green Museum) Author, Author Tannhäuser (Metropolitan Opera, New York, and Royal Opera House, Covent Garden) The Wreckers (Bradford Opera Group)	353-54
PETER CONRAD MICHAEL TREND	To the Editor	355
MARTIN CLARK ERIK de MAUNY	Victoria de Grazia: The Culture of Consent George Clare: Last Waltz in Vienna - The Destruction of a Family 1842-1942 Judith Herzberg (Editor): Charlotte - Life or Theatre?	356
TOM PHILLIPS		357
M. L. ROSENTHAL	R. W. Franklin (Editor): The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson - A Facsimile Edition David Porter: Dickinson - The Modern Idiom	358
BRIAN HARRISON KERRY SCHOTT	Margaret Allen: Selling Dreams - Inside the Beauty Business Thomas Sowell: Markets and Minorities	359
GHITA IONESCU DAVID PEARCE STANLEY MOSS	William E. Connolly: Appearance and Reality in Politics T. W. Hutchison: The Politics and Philosophy of Economics Lenin, Gorky and I (poem)	360
D. M. MACKAY KEITH McCULLOCH J. F. WATKINS PAUL MULDOON	Erich Hart: Windows on the Mind - Reflections on the Physical Basis of Consciousness Ian Wilson: Mind Out of Time? - Reincarnation Investigated Michael B. Sabom: Recollections of Death - A Medical Investigation Fugue (poem)	361
T. O. TREADWELL DAVID MONROSE ALAN BOLD PAUL TAYLOR	Fiction Ron Carlson: Truants Philip Roth: Circles of Time R. E. Harrington: Proud Man Nicholas Meyer: Confessions of a Homing Pigeon	362
F. L. CARSTEN GEORGINA BATTISCOMBE	Edward Crankshaw: Bismarck Andrew Sinclair: The Other Victoria - The Princess Royal and the Great Game of Europe Roger Fulford (Editor): Beloved Maria - Correspondence of Queen Victoria and the German Crown Princess 1878-1885	363
	Short notices	

## A high mind in the making

By Stefan Collini

JOHN STUART MILL:  
Autobiography and Literary Essays  
Edited by John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger

766pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.  
£32.50.  
0 7100 0718 3

Challenged to explain what he means by calling Lydgate a prig, Fred Vinny declares that by a prig he means "a fellow who wants to show that he has opinions". "Why, my dear, doctors must have opinions," soothes Mrs Vinny, adding her rather minimalist view of the medical profession. "What are they there for else?" "Yes, mother, the opinions are paid for," returns Fred, and then, immortally, "But a prig is a fellow who is always making you a present of his opinions." By this - or even, perhaps, any other - standard, Mill was a prig.

There is, in principle, likely to be something particularly disagreeable about a prig's autobiography. Apart from the self-importance inherent in the undertaking itself, the voice seems bound to be at once didactic and self-justifying. One who constantly parades the correctness or superiority of his own opinions and who habitually affects a lofty moral tone has more to lose than most of us by the record of inconsistency, evasiveness and self-deception which any life must leave behind it. Given the intensity of feeling by which priggishness is fuelled, the requisite distance will be hard to attain; where everything is potentially a matter of principle, there can be no matters indifferent. Mill, as the editors of the present volume remind us, was far from being the "chill pedant of caricature"; on the contrary, he was, as the hostile *Times* complained, "in-temperate and passionate" in public life, a man, as John Morley later recalled, "of extreme sensibility and vital heat in things worth waxing hot about". Such heat is frequently fatal to that sense of irony, especially self-irony, which is indispensable to the good autobiographer. Mill could sometimes manage a kind of irony, particularly at the expense of political opponents, though it tended to degenerate into sarcasm as the heat did its work; but a reflective irony about himself did not come easily if at all. This makes him an unpromising case since a pinch of salt is usually regarded as an essential ingredient in any successful recipe for an autobiography, and as with other dishes it is better if it is added by the cook rather than the consumer.

And yet, despite these disqualifications, Mill's *Autobiography* is undoubtedly a nineteenth-century classic, a work which has fascinated, if not always charmed, generations of readers, and which has a secure place in the history of the genre. In part, of course, this reflects Mill's own stature in so many fields of thought, "the only writer in the world", exaggerated Morley, "whose treatises on highly abstract subjects have been printed during his lifetime in editions for the people, and sold at the price of railway novels". In part, too, it reflects the very extraordinary story he had to tell about being the guinea-pig for a unique experiment in education, not just the well-known progression through Greek at three, Latin at seven, logic at twelve, political economy at thirteen, and so on, but his complete isolation from the usual influences of school and peers, and the correspondingly pure impress of his father's views and character. It was not Mill's precocity as such that was remarkable: one can easily imagine him being beaten by owl chess champions and rubik-cube solvers younger than himself. It was, rather, the forced, over-bred development of his powers of analysis and argument in complex subjects like philosophy and political economy. He became, as contemporaries remarked, very much a "made or manufactured man", a high-speed, sharp-edged, turn-it-on-and-it-goes "reasoning machine".

What he was himself willing to undergo for the sake of his instruction may be judged from the fact, that I went through the whole process of preparing my Greek lessons in the same room and at the same table at which he was writing; and as in those days Greek and English Lexicons were not, and I could make no more use of a Greek and Latin lexicon than could be made without having yet begun to learn Latin, I was forced to have recourse to him for the meaning of every word which I did not know. This incessant interruption he, one of the most impatient of men, submitted to, and wrote under that interruption several volumes of his *History*, and all else that he had to write during those years.

And just occasionally, though perhaps too rarely, we get a glimpse of the vulnerable and almost pathetic precocity of the small boy to ape his father and win his love, as in this passage which he eventually omitted from the final draft: "A voluntary exercise to which I was throughout my boyhood much addicted, was what I called writing histories: of course in imitation of my father, who used to give me the manuscript of part of his history of India to read. Almost as soon as I could hold a pen I must needs write a history of India too."

Taken cold, the facts of this upbringing have engendered in most people the response caught by the lines from the *Prelude*, "For this unnatural growth the trainer blame, / Pity the tree". And yet what constitutes the real fascination and achievement of Mill's book is the way he manages, for all his occasional priggishness, to tell the story of this intellectual forced-feeding and his partial, but only partial, recovery from it in that same calm, comprehensive, judicious tone which distinguished almost all his mature writing. The priggishness remains an obstacle: explaining, self-justifying, his avoidance of "sociology" during his years with Harriet, he cannot resist asserting that such socializing has a deplorable tendency to rub the edges off one's convictions ("not to mention loss of time"), adding sententiously: "A person of high intellect should never go into unintellectual society unless he can enter it as an apostle. . . . Persons of even intellectual aspirations had much better, if they can, make their habitual associates of at least their equals, and as far as possible, their superiors, in knowledge, intellect, and elevation of sentiment." But the force of his account survives such disfigurements because on the whole that immense evenness of tone is being deployed in the telling of a story which it seems could not have been issued in an author capable of telling the story in that voice. The tree is twisted and knows it, but it is straighter than it had any right to expect, and is recounting its growth without resentment or special pleading.

This balance is most fully exhibited in the portrait of his father, never an easy subject for an autobiographer and one posing uniquely troubling and uncomfortable problems for Mill. Yet the account is, even-handed without being bland, and full of perceptiveness even about, perhaps especially about, those traits of character from which the young Mill had suffered most pain. His father's harshness and irascibility receive full measure along with his abilities and energy, and it does not hit a false or patronizing note when Mill reflects "it is impossible not to feel true pity for a father who did, and who strove to do, so much for his children, who would have so valued their affection, yet who must have been constantly feeling that he was drying it up at its source". Again, there is empathy and an eye for detail in Mill's comment on his struggles with Greek texts between the ages of three and seven:

The dramatic focus of the earlier chapters is, of course, Mill's famous "mental crisis", which gave to the plot an almost epic structure of growth, crisis and recovery. One odd consequence of this structure has been that the nervous breakdown of this particular twenty-year-old, that world-historical depression which his upbringing seemed to have

Where this balance is notoriously absent is in his embarrassing eulogy of the other figure who dominates his account, Harriet Taylor, the married woman with whom he fell in love at the age of twenty-four, with whom he maintained a long, intense and apparently entirely chaste friendship for the next twenty years, and whom he married in 1851 after the death of her first husband. To stop the gossip about the unseemly intimacy had been one of Mill's main motives for leaving a record of his life, and when Harriet died in 1858, four years after the completion of the first version (now known as "the early draft"), he made much of the revised version a memorial tribute to what he saw as her remarkable talents - more of a poet than Shelley, more of a philosopher than himself, and so on. The extravagance of the praise is self-defeating, and most subsequent readers have concurred in Bain's saddened judgment that these parts of the work reflect "his extraordinary hallucination as to the personal qualities of his wife".

In fact, the chapter dealing with the second half of his life, in which Harriet is so prominent, is also where his priggishness almost entirely submerges the qualities which distinguish the account of his early life. In it he deals, for example, at disproportionate length with his three years as a Member of Parliament, and even then does not really manage to controvert Leslie Stephen's subsequent assessment that the philosopher who took "many-sidedness" as his motto was a good party man in the Commons. Self-justification seems bound to be the stuff of such theories of the eighteenth century. Mill's views may be thought to owe more to the "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads* than to examples of Romantic poetry itself; and one might add to this statement that before this counter it was "not that I disliked poetry, but that I was theoretically indifferent to it", the rider that after it had done its work he was no less "theoretically" disposed in its favour.

Still, the encounter issued in some interesting reflections on poetry, including his now well-known definition that "poetry is feeling, confession of itself to itself in moments of solitude, and embodying itself in symbols, which are the nearest possible representations of the feeling in the exact shape in which it exists in the poet's mind". In distinguishing poetry and eloquence as types of expression of feeling, Mill relied heavily on the epigram that whereas "eloquence is heard, poetry is overheard". As Abrahams pointed out, this necessarily resulted in the characteristic Romantic devaluation of epic or narrative by the short, intense

lyric as the purest form of poetry, and Mill correspondingly elevated Shelley above even Wordsworth, though some of the former's creations were perhaps rather more didactic and extended than would be quite proper for a soliloquy. In fact, Mill quite soon modified his early view to the extent of making the union of thought, especially improving thought, and feeling the hallmark of the best poetry, a view which consoled better with the high educative role he assigned to it.

The liveliness of Mill's aesthetic interests at this stage of his life is also evident in his attempt to apply his distinction to music, to discriminate the "poetry" and the "oratory" of music. For example, in the earliest of these essays he concedes that the then fashionable music of Rossini is expressive, but he sees this as akin to eloquence rather than to poetry; as he nicely puts it, "it is passion, but it is garrulous passion"; Mozart, on the other hand, though also adept at musical oratory, adopts "in his most touching compositions" the style of poetry: "Who can imagine 'Dove sono' heard? We imagine it overheard."

The literary essays also reveal a further unfamiliar side of Mill, his genuine and unusual ability not just to consider the merits of a point of view with which he strongly disagreed, but also to enter into the kinds of resonance or pathos characteristically associated with it (an ability which seemed, perhaps inevitably, to decline as he got older). It is particularly well illustrated here by his long review-article on the poems and romances of Alfred de Vigny, where he writes with sympathy about the sensibilities of a Catholic, royalist, aristocratic soldier who lived through the false glories of the Restoration to the humiliations of the July Monarchy. This essay is also a reminder of Mill's idealization of French culture and intellectual life ("where both politics and poetry . . . are taken completely au sérieux"), a taste which opened a gap between him and that large number of his contemporaries, and majority of his successors, who if they looked abroad at all looked to Germany rather than to France for their intellectual and aesthetic sustenance.

As a critic, as distinct from a theorist, of literature Mill would not earn a place in any nineteenth-century First XI, and the priggishness is part of the problem here, too. A remark about his attitude to poetry in his early unrecorded Benthamite days points to an enduring feature of his responses: "I disliked any or narrative by the short, intense

## Art & Architecture from HMSO

### The V & A Introductions to the Decorative Arts

General Editor: Julian Berry

A series written by the Museum's curators and lavishly illustrated by objects in the Museum's collections.

Full and informative texts with numerous colour illustrations at the lowest possible price.

Str Ray Strong, Director of the V & A Museum.

Medieval Ivory Carvings Paul Williamson  
Important not only for their inherent beauty but also as indicators of stylistic change. £3.50

European Swords Anthony North  
A study of the sword from medieval times up to the armours of the 19th century. £3.50

Brass Eric Turner  
Describes its manufacture from the Middle Ages to the present day discussing its functional and decorative use. £3.50

'Victorian' Genre Painting Lionel Lambourne  
A valuable introduction to an interesting and often misjudged aspect of 19th-century painting. £3.50

Previously published volumes:  
Courtly Jewellery Anna Somers Cocks £2.95  
Fashion Illustration Madeleine Ghosh £2.95  
Japanese Prints Joe Barle £2.95

All volumes have 48 pages and numerous colour and black-and-white illustrations.

### National Monuments Record Photographic Archives

General Editor: Peter Fowler

Drawn from the NMR's unparalleled collection of photographs of historic buildings, this series offers a unique glimpse into England's architectural heritage and living history.

Buildings for the Age: New Buildings 1900-1939

Alastair Forsyth  
Car-parks, airports, cinemas, film studios, lidos and health centres: *Buildings for the Age* gives a photographic survey of the architectural symptoms of a new leisure age. 80pp. illus. Paperback £4.95

Hotels and Restaurants 1830 to the Present Day  
Priscilla Boniface  
A charming and nostalgic and profusely illustrated account of bygone opulence... the captions enchant! Robert Morley Punch 80pp. illus. Paperback £4.95

Fortification  
The Garden Room Priscilla Boniface  
A history of garden buildings in late Victorian England. May. 80pp. illus. Paperback £4.95

Please write for our *Architecture and Building and Art* books catalogue and a leaflet on the NMR series. Free of charge, to RMC, HMSO Books, Atlantic House, Holborn Viaduct, London EC1P 1BN.

HMSO  
BOOKS



sentiments in poetry which I should have disliked in prose; and that included a great deal". And even when dealing with matters of style the achievement is tone in- trudes. He has received credit for being one of the first to give favour- able notice to Tennyson's early poems, in a review reprinted here, and certainly the piece is apprecia- tive and generous. Still, he could not resist rebuking the poet for his lack of development in "general spiritual culture", and his concluding para- graph almost falls into pastiche of the school-report: "In some of the most beautiful of Mr Tennyson's productions there are awkwardnesses and feebledness of expression, occa- sionally even absurdities, to be corrected. . . His powers of versa- tion are not yet of the highest order. . . [These failings] need not have been mentioned except to indi- cate to Mr Tennyson the points on which some of his warmest admirers see most room and necessity for further effort on his part." That will be all, thank you, Mr Tennyson.

None the less, it was not a negligi- ble achievement to have devoted a substantial and discriminating essay to Tennyson in 1835, and the four- teen essays and reviews included in this volume (eleven of which date from the 1830s) indicate Mill's extraordinary range. While spending the greater part of his days at his desk in India House, the young Mill (he was still only twenty-four in 1830) turned out an enormous number of articles on subjects ranging from parliamentary reform to moral philosophy, from French novels to English political economy, and from Tennyson to Tocqueville, and essays, moreover, which have earned a sig- nificant place in the history of the subjects with which they deal. James Mill had always insisted that ques- tions be considered in the light of what he, alarmingly but probably not carelessly, referred to as "the whole of the knowledge which we possess upon any subject". In several ob- vious ways the son was a poor adver- tisement for the merits of the father's system of education, but there is no doubt that that education provided its victim with a quite un- matchable equipment for carrying on the trade of man of letters.

The literary essays reprinted here did not, on the whole, present the editors with any major textual prob- lems. The *Autobiography* most cer- tainly did. There are, to begin with, three surviving MSS copies: the first is of the early draft Mill wrote in 1853-54; the second is of the revised and extended draft which was largely written in 1861 and completed in 1869-70; and the third is the trans- script from this draft made hurriedly by Mill's stepdaughter and other copyists after his death in 1873 from which the first edition was printed in the same year. Some indication of the differences between them is given by Professor Stillingfleet over twenty years ago, that Mill made some 2600 changes, many of them very substantial, between the early and later drafts, and that there are then a further 2650 variants, mostly minor, between that and the copy from which the first edition was printed, though some were corrected in printing.

All three MSS were sold by auction in 1922 - Maggs paid five guineas for the 1st, Mill's final draft went to Columbia University, whence a much improved but still, apparently, inadequate edition, by J. J. Coss, was published in 1924. The MS of the early draft was bought by a pro- fessor at Johns Hopkins, and after his death it languished with the rest of his papers in a Baltimore ware- house for almost twenty years before the collection was bought by the University of Illinois at Urbana in 1958. Thereafter the story belongs to Professor Stillingfleet, who produced the first published edition of the early draft in 1961, and then followed this up with his authoritative text of the final draft from the Columbia MS, published in 1969. These labours have now been *aufgehoben* in the present volume which contains, in its two editions, the texts of the minor corrections apart, the texts of their utility much enhanced by the printing of parallel passages from each draft on facing pages, supplemented by the kind of informative but discreet editorial material which we have come to take for granted in the Toronto edition of Mill's works.

There are some cases where the publication of a "Collected Works"



John Stuart Mill, by a mighty effort of will, I Overcame his natural bonhomie! And wrote Principles of Political Economy. G. K. Chesterton's drawing and E. C. Bentley's clerihew originally published in their Biography for Beginners, 1905, and reproduced in The Complete Clerihews of E. C. Bentley (146pp. Oxford University Press, £5.95, 0 19 212978 3), to be reviewed in a later issue of the TLS.

seems pointless and depressing, espe- cially where the edition incites its way through a statesman's career like a scholarly infantry offensive, and with corresponding loss of life. And even where the edition is of a writer whose works are worth read- ing, they are sometimes so besieged by scholarly apparatus, pressing dis- tracting references upon us and clar- ifying what was never unclear, that we start to long for a clean page of print be the text never so "corrupt". Not only is the Toronto edition of Mill's works entirely free from such reproaches, but it has already wrought a substantial and wholly beneficial change in the face of Mill scholarship, and thus of much else besides, for although the present volume is billed as Volume One of the Collected Works, the past twenty years have seen the publication of seventeen "later" volumes in the series (and there are still several to come).

The charm and the achievement of the edition is to have produced ver- sions of Mill's writings, minor as well as major, where textual variants are available at a glance (and with such an obsessive reviser of his published writings as Mill this can be impor- tant), whilst the main text is as hand- some and clearly produced as any- thing could wish. A term often used in praise of an editor in such cases is "unobtrusive": the praise is certainly due to the general editor of the pro- ject, John M. Robson, and yet that term hardly does justice to the dry, stylish brevity of his contributions, nor to the quiet but unchallengeable authority which he brings to the dis- cussion of disputed issues, large and small.

Mill is sometimes singled out as a quintessentially English thinker. In its crude form this judgment is made up of equal parts of ignorance and prejudice, often laced with a dash of

hostility. In fact, he was the least parochial of writers, and one could as well say, with due allowance for the simplification inherent in such epitomes, that the development of his thought combined English political economy, French Socialism, and (via Carlyle and Coleridge) German philosophy, as well as many other things. Still, he is undoubtedly a major, perhaps one of the most central, figures in English intellectual history, and some sobering reflections may be suggested by the fact that this edition has been conceived and executed entirely from Toronto, and made possible by generous help from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. This fact would surely have astonished Mill and his contemporaries. After all, the one thing even Macaulay never expected his earth-inheriting New Zealander would be doing was producing the collected edition of the works of Macaulay.

been chosen. This is a topic on which the discussion of rights has been impaled for the last decade: many of the fiercer debates about rights are debates about the rights of those who are not able to choose but do need care and support, debates about the rights of fetuses, of the severely handicapped, of the comatose and of animals. Children pre- sent us with the special case of beings who standardly make the transition from dependency to at least average autonomy, and so pos- sess successively the different rights of dependent and autonomous beings. The rights of dependent chil- dren are closely relevant to a consid- eration of the rights of autonomy, with which Wringe is concerned. Children whose rights are violated during their dependency may not even survive to demand the rights of autonomy: those whose rights of de- pendence are never curtailed may never make the transition to autonomy.

Any rights which dependent chil- dren have must be grounded not in capacities for competent choosing, but in something else. Wringe briefly considers various welfare rights, such as rights to material support, to pro- tection and to guidance (including education) which might be claimed on behalf of dependent children against particular persons and com- munities, but neither lists nor justifies these rights in detail, nor ex- plains how the onerous duties which such rights imply ought to be distributed between parents, state agencies and others. The justification of these duties would seem to be both more difficult than the justification of the rights which correspond to them, and relatively less demanding. "Negative" duties, which correspond to rights of autonomy. Yet the only right of de- pendence which Wringe discusses at some length is the right to sufficient education for adult life, one more, a right relevant mainly to older chil-

dren. These omissions mean that the book does not fully achieve its aim of showing that "the notion of rights is . . . applicable to the young". It succeeds in showing only that those who are leaving immaturity and de- pendence should not lack the auto- nomy rights of adults.

In the end this restriction of focus may not be so serious an omission as the absence of discussion of the underlying context within which con- cern with children's rights of all sorts arises. Discussion of the moral basis of life with young children is oddly distorted, as Wringe also notes, by focusing mainly on the rights of de- pendent children and the corre- sponding duties of others. These are the terms in which the breakdown of family life must be sorted out: when something goes awry we need to clarify against whom it is that a de- pendent child may have legally or morally enforceable claims for various sorts of service and care. But when things are going well, the adversarial framework of discussions of rights and duties falls to bring out the distinctive moral features of intimately shared lives in which the interests and concerns of each become part of the interests and concerns of others. Arguably schools, too, in so far as they are moral com- munities, may not be best viewed in terms of the ascription of rights of autonomy and the corresponding duties. Only in situations of break- down, when authority and curricula are called into question and the educational enterprise has gone awry, do we need to focus mainly on the rights even of those children who are competent choosers. By concentrating mainly on the rights of autonomy of the newly and nearly mature, Wringe portrays the bleaker aspect of moral concern about older children with little emphasis on either the ideals or the practices of many schools.

## Strategies of discretion

By Andrew Motion

WILLIAM R. EVANS (Editor): Robert Frost and Sidney Cox Forty Years of Friendship 397pp. University Press of New Eng- land, £12.25, 0 87451 195 X

EDWARD CONNERY LATHAM and LAWRENCE THOMPSON (Editors): Robert Frost: Farm-Poultryman 116pp. University Press of New Eng- land, £7, 0 87451 032 5

"We were a strange pair in our vari- ances. We kept it up between us in a kind of magnanimity of high- minded tolerance of each other's taste." Robert Frost's summary of his friendship with Sidney Cox strikes a characteristically wry note.

But here as elsewhere in his poems and letters, the tone masks and pro- tects strong feelings. Throughout his life, Frost seems to have needed not merely praise, but hero-worship, and in Cox he found an almost ideal acolyte. Although it is usually Cox, in the forty years during which they corresponded, who sounds the more diffident in fact demanding. He required to be approached - and to pontificate - just as badly as Cox required to live his life in sight of an irreproachable example. The story of their relationship, as it is revealed in their letters, makes compelling reading.

In 1911, when they originally met, Frost and Cox were both working as teachers. Frost was thirty-seven, had published very little poetry, and was profoundly dispirited by the restles- sness and disappointments of his past. Cox was fifteen years younger - energetic, idealistic, and innocent. He had been brought up a Baptist, and although this had helped to de- velop a rather orthodox, upright streak in his personality (initially he was disgusted by Frost's scruffiness and iconoclasm), he was romantically impressed by literature. When Frost showed him some manuscript poems Cox's life-long admiration was awakened and the seal was set on their friendship. ("Frost is spontaneous," he was to tell his parents. "He never gives praise when it is sought. He likes nothing because it is highly esteemed. He does not gush over anything or anybody. Show him a picture of a dear relative, and he will not try to say something nice about it." He does not hesitate to ex- pose defects and reveal foibles in notions and in people. But he is invariably kind. And his dry humor saves all the delicate situations as well as glorifies the pleasant ones.")

Shortly after their first meeting, Frost left for Europe, intent on making his name as a poet. Within two years he had published two col- lections (*A Boy's Will* in 1913 and *North of Boston* in 1914) and had established himself prominently in literary London. At regular intervals he relayed news of his triumphs to Cox, passing on gossip about writers and trying out various poetic theories. But Cox's value at this time was not simply his capacity to be impressed - important as that was. He was also a means by which Frost could prepare the way for a suc- cessful return home. Cox faithfully dis- seminated copies of Frost's good re- views, taught his poems, and kept an eye on the American market. A good deal of Frost's wheedling and dealing now looks pretty distasteful, particularly since it involved him in taking a vilely selfish attitude to the war. "It ends my little literary game," he complained, "that's all. No more books from anybody for the present. And the fact seems to be that I needed just one more book to clinch my business."

He need not have worried. By the time he eventually returned to America, in 1915, his own and Cox's efforts had guaranteed him a warm reception. He found himself, at once, in the course which over the next fifty years led him to be come his country's best-loved poet.

its unofficial laureate. It is clear from Lawrence Thompson's biography that this affectionate acclaim was often achieved - in America as it had been in England - by ruthless operating, and at considerable cost to his family and friends. Like Hardy, he projected an image of himself as a natural, homely, wise old boy (he told Cox in 1929 "I fight to be allowed to sit cross-legged on the old flint pile and flake a lump into an artifact") and worked hard to cover the tracks of his ambitious manipulations. As one might expect, there- fore, it is not hard to find plenty of unpleasant bossiness in Frost's letters to Cox. But equally, there is ample compassion and care. Frost con- tinually and kindly checked Cox's uncorralled sentimentality, helped him to obtain jobs as a teacher and gave good advice about teaching methods. Frost was never so sure of himself and his position that he could afford to alienate Cox's friendship.

But in spite of his evident commit- ment to Cox - who must have been, often, an infuriatingly smothering friend - there is a striking and persis- tent restraint in Frost's letters. For one thing, he makes surprisingly few judgments about other poets and poems. And when he does, they are usually competitively derogatory. On one occasion he calls Sandburg "probably the most artificial and studied ruffian the world has had" or another he asks "Why doesn't some- one discover that T. S. Eliot is not more than an extremely competent voice of human giving-up, first in sneers and then in prayers," and on a third he ridicules I. A. Richards' talks on Basic English as "Basic Balls". References to the methods and intentions of his own poems are similarly few and far between. This is partly due, no doubt, to his under- standable fear of affecting his writing with self-consciousness. The corre- spondence abounds with remarks like "You must not disillusion your admirers with the tale of your sources and processes" and "I don't want to search the poet's mind too seriously". The one exception Frost makes to this rule is his willingness to discuss his now celebrated verse theory, "The Sound of Sense", which was shaped during his time in Eng- land. With considerable help from his friend Edward Thomas, who had independently developed similar be- liefs, Frost refined his conviction that "The living part of a poem is the intonation entwined somehow in the syntax, idiom and meaning of a sentence". Cox played a vital part in the evolution of this theory: his rapid and enthusiastic response made him an ideal sounding-board.

From a strictly literary point of view, Frost's letters about "The Sound of Sense" were the most im- portant he sent to Cox. But while their insight and originality are re- markable, it is hardly surprising that Cox should have received them. Frost's friendship with Cox was, after all, one of the most out- standing elements of reserve in Frost's correspondence all the more striking. Although quick to discuss verse theory, Frost steadfastly re- fused to explore the relationship be- tween his own experience and the situations created in his poems. In fact he told Cox virtually nothing about his family and personal life - not even during his traumatic late middle age. Frost's sister died in 1929, his daughter in 1934, his wife in 1938, and in 1940 his son shot himself - and he scarcely mentions any of these events to Cox.

Frost's silence on these subjects is related to his habitually wry tone of voice: it is a more extreme form of shyness and containment. And among other things, it helps to ex- plain his hostility to Helen Thomas after she had published *As It Was* and *World Without End*. Her candid appraisal of life with her husband Edward broke all the rules Frost had laid down for himself.

In one [chapter] she has him invite to the house a girl [Eleanor Far- jeon] he has met and come home full of admiration of. She gives herself away by calling the girl "this aragon of women". But she finds the minute she sees her (how

homely she is) that she can con- quer her with magnanimity. All women are sisters that the same man loves, she tries to make her- self think. Once in the woods listening to a nightingale in the dark E says to the two of them "We are knowing, but then night- engale knows all. Then he kisses his wife and to keep the score even his wife makes him kiss the other woman. She pretends to think that it is large and lovely but I happen to know it was a dose she was giving him and rubbing in. These things are hard to do sin- cerely. And unridiculously."

Frost's dislike of self-revelation also illuminates his fondness for narrative poems. To create a dramatic struc- ture, and to incorporate fictional de- tails or characters, is a way of draw- ing on intense personal feelings with- out embarrassment. It allows the chance of giving a general applicabil- ity to the intimate hurts and anx- ieties which thrust themselves upon a writer. Hence, partly, the power of "Home Burial", and Frost's own lik- ing for the poem. It both objectifies his grief for the death, as a child, of his first son, and explores the subse- quent difficulties in his relationship with his wife.

"The little graveyard where my people are / So small the window frames the whole of it / Not so much larger than a bed- room, is it? / There are three stones of slate and one of marble, / Broad-shouldered little slabs there in the sunlight / On the sidehill. We haven't to mind those. / But I understand: it is not the stones. / But the child's mound / "Don't, don't, don't, don't," she cried.

Cox understood Frost's strategies for discretion, and appears to have accepted the implication that even the closest friends could not expect to be told everything they wanted to hear. Yet as a young man it seems he could never quite resist the tempta- tion to push his luck, and in later life he paid a price for it. He was keen to celebrate his relationship with Frost by publishing a critical study, but Frost stubbornly resisted him. "I have written to keep the 'over- curious out of the secret places of my mind both in my verse and in my letters to such as you", Frost once snapped at him. Eventually, though, Cox had his way, and his *Biography of Frost* was published post- humously. Frost was even prevailed upon to write an introduction. In spite of his refusal to read the book itself, but he must have known that Cox would loyally and revealingly concentrate on discussing "The Sound of Sense". If he had imagined less well of the book, he would have referred to their friendship in less self-deprecating terms. The introduc- tion's modesty is a form of grate- fulness: his intimacy with Cox, Frost says, "was a curious blend of differ- ences that if properly handled might prove an almost literary curiosity".

Frost's letters to Cox are a literary goldmine. But twelve years before the two met, Frost was engaged in an activity which produced a genuine "curiosity". After trying his hand as a textile worker, impresario, elocutionist and conchologist he was advised to find work outdoors - his doctor suspected TB - and decided to set up as a poultry farmer. He borrowed money from his grand- father, looked over a farm in Mas- sachusetts to get the know-how, and then brought one of his own near Derry, New Hampshire, where he installed three hundred White Wyandottes. In the evenings, to supple- ment his income and try to sup- press his aspirations did hard, he wrote short articles - twelve in all, part fiction, part instruction - for the journals *Eastern Poultryman* and *Farm Poultry*. Edward Connery Latham and Lawrence Thompson have collected them and written a detailed introduction - but their appreciation of a family ludicrous element in the project means that they write with exaggeratedly



"Drink Coca Cola" by Jean Thomas Ungerer, from an exhibition of his work at Karl and Föper, Munich, which runs until April 30.

straight faces: "Those familiar with [Frost's] poetry and aware of his years devoted to poultry raising cannot fail to notice the occasional glimpses of images and circumstances which combine poetic truths about hens and actual experience with their hopeful care and breeding."

In fact the interest of Robert Frost: *Farm-Poultryman*, entirely vindicates the editors' efforts in tracking down the articles. These, rather off- puttingly, are called things like "The Universal Chicken Feed" and "The Cockerel Buying Habit" - but cast a revealing light on Frost's character and literary beliefs. The articles pre- sently reveal preoccupations which were to become major themes in Frost's later poetry. "Trap Nests", for instance - which describes a method of encouraging reluctant birds to lay - devolves into a discus- sion of will. Chickens will, admittedly, but will none the less. Several other stories raise issues of courage, pertinacity and fear - and they are all, without exception, written with the scrupulous attention to rural ac- cent and detail, and with the sense of dramatic shape, which Frost was to exploit in the eulogues of *North of*

Boston. In "The Housekeeper", for instance:

She wants our hens to be the best there are. / You never saw this room before a show, / Full of lank, shivery, half-drowned birds in separate coups, having their plumage done - / The smell of the wet feathers in the heat!

Frost later made similarly good use of his poultry days in "A Blue Ribbon at Amesbury", but as his involvement with literature deepened he had less time for chickens. By 1906, seven years after buying his farm, Frost was teaching regularly at the local Pinkerton Academy - and seven years after that he was in England cultivating his reputation. When he eventually returned to America, famous, he was inter- viewed by a reporter from the *Phila- delphia Public Ledger* who could not ignore the unifying element in Frost's apparently diverse careers: "He is a Puritan who has fought the soil for sustenance and has fought the world for recognition as a poet."



## The Feathered Ogre

Written and illustrated in full-colour by LEE LORENZ. A witty fairy story by the well-known cartoonist of *The New Yorker*, telling the adventures of Jack, a simple piper, who sets off to rescue a princess from the clutches of a ferocious feathered ogre. Ages 5-7. 26 March. £5.95.

## Life of the Honeybee

Full-colour photographs and text by HEIDEROS and ANDREAS FISCHER-NAGEL. An outstanding description of the life-cycle of the bee, a simple text and full-colour photographs. Ages 8-9. 6 May. £4.95.

## The Chewing-Gum Rescue and Other Stories

MARGARET MAHY. Illustrated in black-and-white by Jan Ormerod. A delightful collection by this well-loved author, depicting an enchanted world in which the ordinary and the extraordinary intermingle - pumpkins are persecuted, griffons weep and a bus queue sings. Ages 8-14. £4.95.



## Coming in May

A new collection of stories by PAUL BIEGEL for children of 8 years and over - *Grocodile Man*. £4.95. A new novel for young adults by NIGEL HINTON - *Buddy*. £5.95.

## DENT

Available from all good booksellers or in case of difficulty, direct from the Marketing Dept., Dent, Ltd., 10, Dart & Sons Ltd., 55 Whitehall Street, London W1C 6LX - cheque/P.O. with order (please add 10% for postage and packing).



# The Higher Cosiness

By George Watson

RICHARD HOGGART:

An English Temper  
Essays on Education, Culture and  
Communications  
207pp. Chatto and Windus. £9.50.  
0 7011 2581 0

As the frozen river of British politics breaks leftwards in a violent spring thaw, the fragments grow hard to count. There are Hard Left and Soft Left. Healey Moderates and Pöhl Who Should Never Have Been There in the First Place, not to mention Prentice Tories and Mayhew Liberals and (of course) Social Democrats. Mr Richard Hoggart, Warden of Goldsmiths' College, London, belongs with E. P. Thompson and Raymond Williams to a fragment I shall call the Conventional Left, and he has now collected some twenty of his essays mainly written in the late 1970s, since he ceased to work with UNESCO in Paris. But no single epithet, it must be admitted, comes near to offering a tight fit. The Conventional Left are outside party politics, as commonly understood, being academic or ex-academic. They are conventional in that their sources are frankly and unquestioningly Victorian and Edwardian, as if acknowledging that socialism is a wholly Victorian faith. More than that, they come near to being Victorians themselves, in the sage-like tradition of Ruskin, Matthew Arnold and William Morris. Placidly familiar in their home lives, and comfortably placed, though beardless, they are plainly the nearest thing to Victorian intellectuals in British life today.

Even the myths of their origins, if not the origins themselves, are broadly reminiscent. Usually humble of birth, at least in recollection, they were none the less carefully nurtured and educated, if at public expense. Then on through literary Marxism. Popular-Front style, with strong admixtures of D.H. Lawrence and his prophet F. R. Leavis, and so into academe through adult education; whence a pile of ponderous and respectable tomes like *The Making of the English Working Class*, appearing between 1957 and 1963 to herald the liberation of *Lady Chatterley* and the dawn of the New Left in the late 1960s. And from there into public life, of a sort, or at least the public eye: the plinth of Nelson's Column, membership of some public body like the Arts Council, and invitations to such foreign centres of mind as the University of Bremen.

So much for the heyday. Since the mid-1970s, admittedly, the Conventional Left has had it less exciting, though Trident and the cruise missile have lately helped to keep its spirits up in what Mr Hoggart, in the last words of his new book, high minded-ly calls "an almost overwhelmingly naughty world". But there have been compensations: quiet affluence masked by a studiously shabby aspect, country houses (one or more each), opera and hi-fi. The Conventional Left, since its climax in the 1960s, has turned quietly consumeristic, shyly revealing to all who care that its noisy disdain for post-industrial opulence was based on a haunting fear of its own vulnerability in the face of material temptation. In all such matters, notoriously, there are difficult balances to strike, and Hoggart is good at striking them. It would be quite wrong to think of the Conventional Left as secretly coveting the truth is more complicated than that. It wishes social progress well. It has not forgotten its adolescent dreams or its ancient socialist ideals. In fact it knows no others. It may well be seen on that plinth in Trafalgar Square once again. Nor is it unaware of the contradictions easily to be discerned between what it preaches and what it does. It is, after all, living a dialectic. If its tastes are by now frankly expensive, it reaches for them with the wary, apologetic grimace of an adolescent reaching for the bottle.

At the root of all this lies a preoccupation with style, and not just in a literary sense. The Conventional Left is best imagined as a face

pressed against the pane of an upper-middle-class window, staring covetously in. There is a style of life going on in there which, as it ardently believes, any one of us would have if he but could: reading *Lady Chatterley's Lover* with a view to emotional enlightenment rather than titillation, managing to talk to some one who once talked to F. R. Leavis, four-lettering unaffectedly in mixed company and drinking gin in appropriate mixtures. All that voice can have. But beyond all this, to keep social grace honed up to its proper edge, is something you cannot so easily have: a world of glittering prizes, enviable because unattainable even with money. Brideshead, in fact. Mr Hoggart's affable prose stirs into angry hatred at the least hint of it, writing of Oxford and Cambridge as if they were similar, even identical institutions, both as between themselves and as within themselves, college by privileged college. The myth of Oxbridge as an aristocratic preserve dies hard, if at all, and Hoggart is indifferent to all suggestions that such places have never in all their academic histories been anything less than socially comprehensive. His republicanism, too, to which he once refers he strikes one as of a similarly spectacular kind, as of one who cannot countenance anything of which he is not himself a part. "We are all, in a way, promoting styles", he writes of university teachers; and the context suggests that, though he was once a professor of English himself, it is not literary style that he mainly has in mind. As in his earlier book, *The Uses of Literacy* (1957), a childhood and youth in back-street Leeds is made to sound as remote as Ultima Thule and as inhospitable as the Gobi desert. There is always something terribly privileged and terribly exciting going on somewhere else, inside an Establishment whose doors, though occasionally ajar, are never truly flung open wide.

In its rhetoric the Conventional Left is dedicated to a long litany about culture and communications. It is nowhere more Victorian than in this. Its acknowledged master here is Matthew Arnold, who inspected schools for thirty-five years. Hoggart is revealing on his early attitudes to Henry Adams and George Orwell too, but his essay on "Matthew Arnold HMI" is a bafflingly lucid instance of his procedures throughout. Like the rest, it is confidently composed in total indifference to all modern scholarship on the subject, sustained only by an engaging affection tinged with an empathetic distaste of self-identification. It never even occurs to Hoggart that Arnold might have misrepresented the facts of his own public career in education. He "served magnificently", we are told, as an inspector of schools, in what amounts to "a heroic personal story". This is a resounding tribute to Arnold's eloquence. But it is the view of many of Arnold's own contemporaries, who simply go unmentioned here. James Runciman, for example, in *Schools and Scholars* (1887), which appeared a year before Arnold's death, accused him of having cruelly teased and patronized poor pupils, as well as of committing gross negligence in the execution of his duties to education; "preaching and flinching in his exclusively condescending way for years, but amid all his mincing talk about sweetness and light he never thought of bestowing a little sweetness and light on the young teachers whose interests he was paid to further".

This is not an isolated Victorian charge against Arnold's integrity. Twenty years earlier, in an article in *Macmillan's Magazine* (August 1867), Henry Sidgwick had ironically dubbed him "The Prophet of Culture" and an "elegant Jeremiah", adding happily that "there is nothing more striking than the imperturbable cheerfulness with which Mr Arnold seems to sustain himself on the fragment of culture that is left him and the deluge of Philistinism that sees, submerging our age and country". Sidgwick and Runciman are not interested or contemptible witnesses, and their charge that Arnold was an

elegant and self-seeking humbug who wrote specious cant while neglecting his official duties is not a view confined to themselves. It needs to be answered. Hoggart, satisfied by Arnold's own lofty account of his own career, writes as if the charge had never so much as been made.

Being a Victorian displaced into the late twentieth century can have its odd effects. One of them is to take certain of the Victorians immensely seriously. Another is not to look hard at the world you are actually living in. In an admiring article called "Allen Lane and Penguins" Hoggart seriously claims that the *Lady Chatterley* trial of more than twenty years ago, in which he was a notable witness in defence of Lawrence's novel, amounted to an Establishment ploy, a ruling class seeking for knowledge. Rather like the ploy of some bedridden old woman in the mouths of certain evangelical preachers, the sturdy ambition for knowledge of the common man serves as argument here, and the assumption that British life is run as a ruling-class ramp is not, in this prose, open to any question. At the *Chatterley* trial, we are told, the Establishment showed its ugly hand, and by sure instinct the common man "knew them when he saw them". "Them", needless to say, means all those gentry flouting their posh accents and their cheque-books, out to stop ordinary chaps getting hold of a bit of honest life in cheap paperback.

But we can all share Hoggart's honest admiration for the late Allen Lane and his excellent Penguins without endorsing an extreme terminology of sanctification; and to talk about Penguin's sense of caring about the mind or their "respect for people in themselves, whatever their backgrounds" without mentioning the pile they quite justifiably made out of that ill-judged and ill-conducted prosecution speaks little for the critic's awareness of the world he is living in. An Establishment as incompetent as the prosecution in the *Chatterley* trial hardly deserves the name. It plays straight into the hands of its adversaries, and Hoggart isn't worth the obloquy that is admissible upon his head. Nor is it credible to suppose that the back streets of Leeds, twenty years ago, were more enlightened in their attitude to cheap sex-chat than Old Etonians or Old Harrovians; or that Mr Gerald Gardner QC, now Lord Gardner (Harrow and Magdalen), counsel for Penguin's defence, is a convincing representative of the Common Man. The trial of *Lady Chatterley* was nothing like a class struggle. Hoggart is fond of substituting assertion for argument, and assures us that when Penguins publish a book we do not usually feel that "choice are made solely, or even pre-eminently, on commercial grounds". This may indeed be what he feels, and as a feeling it does him credit. Now all we need is a bit of evidence. How does he know?

The significance of "English" in the title of this collection remains teasingly unclear. Hoggart is certainly an Englishman. At times, as the witness-box in the *Chatterley* trial, he almost appears to wish to speak for England, and perhaps for Scotland and Wales as well. This claim is largely but not wholly absurd. For one thing, his literary reference is strikingly uncosmopolitan, and it is a long time since I have read a work of intellectual socialist apologetics that does not mention the name of the Hungarian Lukács or the German Marx. But if it is an implication of the title that socialism is after all a traditionally English state of mind, then I believe that proposition to be altogether too surprising to be left floating in the air: it would have to be argued at length, if at all. Decency, of course, is another matter, and perhaps Hoggart does think the two terms more or less interchangeable; but in that case he would have to labour to persuade us all the more.

On the other hand, the English have recently acquired an international reputation. In these post-imperial times, for a cosy affability, which



A sight for four-eyes: one of many photographs in *A Nation of Shopkeepers*, by Bill Evans and Andrew Lawson (128pp. Plexus. £9.95. 0 35965 031 6).

these essays certainly have; and for a whimsicality which, in their Arnoldian solemnity, they notably lack. These are indeed solemnly affable essays, composed out of a consciousness of virtue that the author is unashamedly anxious to share with others. A naughty world is not to be allowed to get away with it all the time, so we are ceaselessly given to understand: there is a moralist in the wings, waiting to pounce.

But it is the sheer cosiness of these papers that remains their most memorable characteristic; and that English means, in this title, means nice. It also means brave, in a way, and Hoggart is fond of phrases like "hard challenge" and "discipline" in thought, which somehow sound cosy too. He is never, after all, hard on himself, and the discipline is always for some one else. He believes, for example, that our public schools must be integrated into the maintained sector, since they "waste" teaching resources and are "socially disastrous because they are monstrously separatist". It does not occur to him that no British government has the power to act in this way, even if it wished, since Channel Isles, the Riviera, Switzerland or the Irish Republic, becoming even more expensive and separatist in the process. The DES writ stops at Dover, and Dover is awfully close. This is a plain truth many a socialist will avow: in private the next step is to get him to admit it in public. We are a small island, and the world is not only naughty but big.

Again, Hoggart is utterly convinced that education means schools, universities and adult education; and in one of the liveliest essays here, the first, he warns the adult education teacher against the easy temptations of intellectual flabbiness, like sitting on the table in front of your class, swinging your legs and saying "it all depends...". Too cosy all that: "You are not sufficiently often challenged". Too good; but Hoggart might consider taking his own medicine by accepting some of the challenges that have been offered him here, and to his hero Matthew Arnold too. It is not as obvious as he thinks that education is mainly a matter of institutions. Anyone who has been a university teacher will know that, on interviewing for entrance, it is easy to get behind the school but hard or impossible to get behind the home. Parental influence can be greater by the teacher's; and to be brought up in a house full of books, especially if they are discussed even at breakfast, can be a higher educational benefit than going to Winchester. If Hoggart imagines he is going to achieve a substantial degree of educational equality by integrating the school system, then events themselves could prove him seriously mistaken. The hard challenge then is to ask him whether the state should abolish the family. Some states, after all, have.

There are harder challenges still. Why, for example, have family and region revived in the Britain of the past twenty years, producing a new race of students who retain their regional accents by choice, and who by choice often return to their places of origin rather than setting forth in labour to persuade us all the more. On the other hand, the English have recently acquired an international reputation. In these post-imperial times, for a cosy affability, which

nationalism that accompanies it. Or again, what sufficient reason have we ever been offered to suppose that there is, or ever has been, such a thing as a working class in Britain? Or that its members have ever been more radical in their instincts than anyone else? Orwell, who is the subject of one of these essays, attacked both these easy assumptions, but you would never guess it from this account of his mind. And, third, what sufficient ground do we have to suppose that English or any other literature offers an effective and indispensable centre to a moral life? The assumption is omnipresent in *An English Temper*, and carries a lot of baggage with it: indeed Hoggart, writing as a teacher of literature, calls himself "republican, agnostic and socialist".

Perhaps, then, he has literary grounds for holding these views, such as an adolescence spent holding Penguins or Thinkers' Library volumes in hand. But residue of that enthusiasm, amiable as it is, does not wear well into later life, as the essay on Arnold shows. There are objections to literary moralism which have not even been considered here. I suspect that assertions about God or social justice are only inadequately supported by reading Honours English at a university, and that the dogmatic confidence of these essays is little more than an assumption borrowed from Victorian masters. Such masters above all demand belief; and Hoggart's essays, in similar fashion, are convincing to the extent that he himself is found to be so. You believe them, if you do, because you believe in him. All that smacks of a cult. But it is rash to pontificate unless one is a pontiff; and even pontiffs should offer ex cathedra judgments only sparingly, if at all.

"My next book", Hoggart writes in his preface to this one, lauding as he does so the disciplines and constraints he sees as characterizing his own essays, "will start at page 1 and go right on to the end". But where, one asks, will page 1 begin? Will the usual clutch of Conventional Left assumptions about the benevolence of the state in controlling broadcasting and much besides, perhaps, or about the eternal wisdom of the Common Man and an embelmed myth of a British Working Class, spiced with the familiar paranoia against "Them" and the superior schools and colleges that put Them where they are?

Or will it dare to start the argument about communications and culture a little further back, asking questions about the questions themselves? It might start by asking whether the Victorian dogmas of socialism and class struggle any longer or have any serious claim, near the end of this highly educative century, to be seen as progressive at all. Left-wing is not God-given: it needs to be probed. A good many of the essays in this book, by now noticed that to be prosperous and free, a worker needs above all to live in the capitalist West, and that socialism today provides the most efficient system of oligarchic privilege on earth. We need thinkers bold enough to question the assumptions on which our traditional social debates are built. That, intellectually speaking, is the meaning of the spring thaw now animating our public life. Mr Hoggart is not such a voice. But it is one of high amiability, for all that and reminiscent of an age of certainties once potent and now dying or dead.

## A world unfit for heroes

By Hermione Lee

JOHN BATCHELOR:  
The Edwardian Novellists  
251pp. Duckworth. £18.  
0 7156 1109 7

"Every English department has its Victorianists and its Modernists, but who has ever heard of an academic Edwardianist?" Samuel Hynes asked in *Edwardian Occasions* (1972). Ten years on, there is still room for a book which draws together Conrad, Ford, Wells, Bennett, Galsworthy and Forster as "the Edwardian novelists", and which, though discriminating carefully between them, suggests the ways in which their personalities and their work reflect and express Edwardian characteristics.

In his densely packed and wide-ranging introductory chapter, John Batchelor at once faces up to the problems of definition, dating and selection which have exercised other "Edwardianists" such as Hynes and Richard Ellmann (in his splendid essay "The Two Faces of Edwardianism"). Does the term "Edwardian" apply strictly to 1901-1910, Edward VII's reign? Or does the era begin with 1900, or further back, with the Wilde scandal of 1895? Does it end in 1910, when Virginia Woolf said human character (not "nature" as Batchelor has it) changed, or in 1914 with Wyndham Lewis's *Blasphemy*, and the Great War? Batchelor contents himself with saying that the period is "muzzy at the edges", and sensibly extends the parameters to include Conrad's early novels of the 1890s, Ford's mid-1920s tetralogy, and Forster's posthumously published *Maurice*, with its post-1914 revisions.

His selection raises some unanswered questions. Though *A Passage to India* is taken to be Forster's only novel of major importance (the others are classed as "not more than good minor novels"), it is not included. Yet it was begun long before 1924, and certainly it extends the terms of the "Edwardian liberal dilemma" which Batchelor finds at the centre of the earlier work. Some major novels which do fall in the Edwardian period are excluded - notably the late novels of James, and Joyce's re-working of *Stephen Hero* (1904-5) into *Portrait* (1907-8), which Ellmann suggestively describes as a move from the Victorian to the Edwardian novel. Some likely minor figures who are at least partly Edwardians - Conan Doyle, Rider Haggard, Walter de la Mare - do not get into the index. It is not even interesting to consider, in the Edwardian context, the early work of writers now thought of as Modernists: Lawrence's *The White Peacock* and *Sons and Lovers* (a particularly telling contrast to Bennett's *Clayhanger*), or Dorothy Richardson's *Poisoned Roofs* and Virginia Woolf's *The Voyage Out*, as female versions of the Edwardian Bildungsroman. It seems a pity to have concentrated only on novels in a period so rich in short stories (Joyce's *Dubliners* and Katherine Mansfield's *In A German Pension*, for instance), Conrad's "The Secret Sharer" and "The Shadow-Line" are dismissed as over-rated, and "Typhoon", unfortunately, is not mentioned. Kipling, one of the great Edwardians, does not merit his own chapter because he is not a novelist.

If an all-male "great tradition" of "the" Edwardian novelists is accepted, however, then this book offers a vigorous and sometimes unorthodox approach to it. The first chapter establishes the terms. Batchelor doesn't use Yeats's famous remarks about 1900 ("Everybody got down off his stilts; henceforth no body drank absinthe with his black coffee; nobody went mad; nobody committed suicide; nobody joined the Catholic church; or if they did I have forgotten"), but some of these hints are pursued. Edwardians (Batchelor says) inhabited "a contracting moral universe", their leading "anxiety", as G. E. Moore's well-known question suggests, was "over what was good, what was

right, where duty lay". Their imagination (pace Chesterton) was predominantly secular; their old certainties were being eroded; they were afraid of the degeneration of the race, the threat of invasion, and the "abyss" of urban poverty. These terrors were countered by a nostalgia for rural England - Pan, the green-wood, hayfields, yeomen, the "House Beautiful", messing about in boats (Batchelor is very good on *The Wind in the Willows*) - and by the rise of the suburban hero. In "popular" literature, the dandy survived from the 1890s, in Saki, Corvo and early Woodhouse; and the imperial adventurer also lived on, at school in *Stalky & Co*, playing the game in *Kim*, romantically virile in Buchan and Haggard.

But for the major Edwardian writers the central question, for themselves as for their characters, was the effectiveness of action in a godless and precarious world. "Inhospitality to heroism", "I want to howl and foam at the mouth", Conrad writes to Edward Garnett in 1898. "In the morning, I get up with the horror of that powerlessness I must face through a day of vain action." "It is very sad, is it not?" Bennett says of the human struggle in one of his "self-help" books, *How To Live on Twenty-Four Hours a Day* (1908). "And yet I think it is rather fine, too, this necessity for the tense bracing of the will before anything worth doing can be done." "Find the thing you want to do most intensely, make sure that's it, and do it with all your might", the heroine of Wells's *Ann Veronica* (1909) is told. But Galsworthy's Milton (in *The Patrician*) resigns himself to "a life of unending... passivity", and Forster's Philip Herrington says: "Some people are born not to do things. I'm one of them."

The traditional virtues of the hero and builder of empires - strenuousness, courage, facing the impossible task - coexist with anxiety, passiveness (usually sexual), self-concealment, isolation, and a backward-looking liberalism afraid of the future. The greatest novels of the period - *Lord Jim*, *Nostromo*, *The Good Soldier*, *Tono-Bungay*, *The Old Wives' Tale* - and those which Batchelor finds most typically Edwardian - *The Man of Property*, *A Room With A View*, and *Howards End* and *Clayhanger* - all deal with the problems of heroes. "For Conrad the writer-as-hero is a man of action, for Wells he is a social projectile in constant upward flight, for Bennett he is the provincial arriviste" and for Galsworthy and Forster he is the confused, sexually passive liberal. All of these writers are struggling with the clash between "the devalued and directionless" state of the Edwardian hero and the "freighted literary conventions in which he still had to be dramatized and presented".

There is a danger that such generalizations can be too persuasive and too easy (in order that his Edwardians may be insecure, Batchelor must subscribe to the assumption that all Victorians had confident, sturdy moral values). Distinctions between different kinds of writers

can be blurred, as in Walter Houghton's *The Victorian Frame of Mind*. When umbrellas like "Anxiety" are used. The validity of the general thesis depends on the scrupulousness with which each writer is treated.

I was puzzled and disappointed by the chapter on Ford, which dismisses his "feeble" early work, praises *The Fifth Queen*, without relating it very clearly to Edwardianism, looks briefly at the "Jamesian limited narrator" of *The Good Soldier*, and just mentions the Tietjens books as Ford's "farewell to the Edwardians". More generally, I found the book's tendency to scuttle rapidly from one short paragraph and one point to another rather wearing, and there is some over-insistence: "proleptic images" crop up in *Lord Jim*, *The Fifth Queen*, *The Secret Agent*, and *The Longest Journey*. I would have liked some relating of English Edwardian fiction to its American and European counterparts (what bearing do Zola and the American Naturalists have on Bennett's pessimistic determinism?) and I resisted some of the bland value judgments: "Youth has a place among the Conrad stories that will always be re-read"; "Romance has to be one of the dullest adventure stories in literature".

But the book deals very well with the old Woolfian heresy of lumping Bennett, Wells and Galsworthy together as realists who could not get at the human heart. Galsworthy, Batchelor points out, is much more like Forster; Virginia Woolf herself is not so much unlike Bennett (especially in their perception of the social conditioning of women) and, again, Bennett's conservatism is quite unlike Wells's "pungent aggressiveness". There are lively accounts of the strategies with which Wells's heroes defy or come to dominate their class, of Bennett's perspective on the Five Towns, of the carefully invoked "habits" of Galsworthy's confused, misogynist anti-heroes, and of Forster's repressed homosexuality as the key to his characteristically Edwardian "persona", the "nervous and incompetent" suburbanite who must be saved through involvement in a relationship. Batchelor is severe on *Howards End*'s "proselytizing" soginess, and though one needn't agree that the novel "loses its way", it's time that this gospel of English liberalism had a dressing-down.

Conrad is, properly, the major Edwardian, and Batchelor writes suggestively about the religious "temperament" underlying *Heart of Darkness*, about the compromise of heroism in Conrad's "fraudulent", demoralized imperialist world, and about the change of direction after *Nostromo*, when, in *The Secret Agent*, "the desire to know is replaced by a disgusted knowingsness", and heroism is no longer a possibility. Conrad's insistence on his work as "action... nothing but action", coexisting with the painfulness and dubiousness of action both for him and for his heroes, is seen as the Edwardian paradox. But it is, of course, a measure of Conrad that he cannot be summed up by reference to his period or by comparison with his contemporaries. To "place" Conrad as an Edwardian novelist is to illuminate but not to master him.

## Deadlines

Sullen, they lie in their tissue paper,  
Refusing to speak or to move their limbs.  
If they know the plot, they do not like it.

The ardent hero has lost his voice,  
The incestuous father has forgotten his vice,  
And the heroine is in her depressive phase.

What can I do? One of them labours  
Into a sitting position. He cranks open his mouth  
And speaks. Do you come here often? he grins.

Connie Bensley

## Some February and March titles

Clinging to the  
Wreckage  
A Part of Life  
John Mortimer

The author of *Voyage Round My Father* and creator of Rumpole recalls times of high theatricality in legal trials, as well as more serious issues tried in the theatre, in a compassionate, humorous and beautifully written autobiography. £8.50

Harold Macmillan  
A Biography  
Nigel Fisher

This illuminating and incisive biography by Sir Nigel Fisher MP, who has known Macmillan and observed him in action for 35 years, resolves many of the questions left unanswered in Sir Harold's own multi-volume memoirs. £12.95

1900  
Rebecca West  
A beautifully evocative and atmospheric picture of the year 1900 - *Sunday Express*

"This is history breezy and clear-eyed... We should add, with a great cheer, to 1900's table of events: Rebecca West, eight years old, and noticing" - Janet Morgan, *Sunday Times* £9.95

Children of the  
Empire  
Gillian Wagner

"Gillian Wagner gets it just right... The children whose faces look out from the pages of this book... illustrations, their eyes defiant and anxious, could not have found a better chronicler" - John Rae, *Listener* £10.95

The Mond Legacy  
Jean Goodman

The Melchett are one of the few great families in which four successive generations have made an impact on history in different spheres. This fascinating story of their achievement, based on the family papers, also explores their complex family relationships and their search for religious identity. £11.50

Londinivm  
London in the  
Roman Empire  
John Morris

This portrait of Roman London, carefully constructed from both archaeological and documentary sources and including illustrations and skillfully drawn new maps, recreates what life was like in its streets and buildings. £15.00

The New World of  
Gold  
Timothy Green

"Fluent and sometimes racy prose... invariably accurate and up-to-date" - *Metal Bulletin* "a valuable book for the non-specialist gold observer" - *Financial Times* £7.95

Bernini in France  
An Episode in  
Seventeenth-  
Century History  
Cecil Gould

This fascinating account of Bernini's visit to the court of Louis XIV in 1665 gives a vivid picture of the artistic and intellectual life of the time, reveals his important and lasting influence on French art, and contains by far the largest collection of Bernini's opinions on art and artists. With 16 pages of illustrations £12.95

Life with the Enemy  
Collaboration and  
Resistance in  
Hitler's Europe,  
1939-45  
Warner Rings

Translated by  
J. Maxwell Brownjohn  
"One of the few genuinely original interpretations of the character of the Second World War published since 1945" - John Keegan, *Sunday Times* £9.95

The Cutler Files  
Horace Cutler

Sir Horace looks at the existing structure of the town hall workforce, and sets out his ideas for streamlining and improving both the staff and the services, in an anecdotal report on local government which will be a revelation to the unsuspecting citizen. £6.95

The Two-Edged  
Sword  
Armed Force in the  
Modern World  
Laurence Martin

The full text of Professor Martin's controversial 1981. Relith Lectures, with notes and a guide to further reading, makes essential reading for everyone concerned with the threat of global nuclear conflagration. £5.95

The Irrelevance of  
Conventional  
Economics  
Thomas Balogh

"This is a brilliant, perceptive and persuasive book which should be obligatory reading for those now studying economics who may still be suffering the misapprehension that it is a neutral or value-free science" - Stuart Holland, *Guardian* £16.50

In the Modern  
Governments series  
Japan: Divided  
Politics in a  
Growth Economy  
J. A. A. Stockwin

The second edition of the standard guide fully revised to take account of new work on institutional policies, the elections of 1976 and 1979, the 1973-4 oil crisis, and Japan's role in the 1980s. Cased £15.00 Paper £8.50

ALL ON SALE NOW

Wentland & Nicolson







different decrees about the acceptability of colours, cornices, lintels, architraves, sloping roofs and so on. They also formed themselves into what Wolfe calls "art compounds" enclaves through which they were able to free themselves from their patrons and dictate their own terms. Remarkably they succeeded: the much despised bourgeoisie came cap in hand to the compound asking for designs. This was the inspiring vision which the American boys took home with them in the 1920s.

The first signs of the arrival in America of the International Style came, Wolfe claims, in 1932, when Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson wrote a catalogue for a show at the Museum of Modern Art which distinguished between true architecture and mere building (Wolfe fails to point out that Ruskin had made the same distinction in 1854), celebrated the work of Le Corbusier, Mies, Gropius and Oud, and deprecated the Americans and their skyscrapers. The catalogue hit home hardest among the Rockefeller and other rich patrons of the arts who "baited but impressed", urged American architects to follow the European lead. When Mies, Gropius and other refugees arrived in the States in the late 1930s, they found themselves being worshipped as "white gods"; and within three years the course of American architecture had changed, utterly. (Wolfe's is a cheap version of history, where all changes are "utter" or "overnight" or "all at once".) Frank Lloyd Wright, having only recently won recognition, was swiftly demoted and "treated as a species of walking dead man". The vogue was now to build only one kind of building – the meagrely proportioned "glass box". Thus it came about that at the period of its greatest exuberance, or what Wolfe calls its "full-blooded, go-to-hell, belly-rubbing, wahoo-yahoo youthful rampage" America was saddled with buildings of the utmost mean-spiritedness. What had begun as worker housing for a depressed, poverty-stricken Europe in the "rubble" after the First World War had ended as the reigning architectural style of the richest nation on earth.

Wolfe deals sympathetically with the "apostates" who sought a way out of the grim consensus of the glass box – Edward Durrell Stone, Bero Saarinen, Morris Lapidus, John Portman and others. Frank Lloyd Wright, for him they are true pariahs like Andrew Wyeth (and therefore not pariahs), men of "rude animal vigour" who expressed something of "the hog-stomping

Baroque exuberance of American civilization". In academic circles, though, they have met with "anathematism" – a shrug, a snigger and "that look". For to announce a departure from the reigning style one has to play the game right, as Robert Venturi did in his *Complexity and Contradiction in Modern Architecture*, which pretends to attack the compound mentality while preserving its tenets.

Wolfe gives excessive space to Venturi, as he does in his last two chapters to arguments between rival American schools like Venturi's Pop movement, the Rats (Rationalists), the Whites, the Grays and the Structuralists. This makes his book oddly imbalanced: after the irrelevant treatment of Le Corbusier ("Corbul the way Greta Garbo was Garbol") and Gropius ("the Silver Prince") and Mies ("he looked rather like a Ruhr industrialist"), there's something insular about his respectful attention to the last five years. But then the existence of these arguments, and the energy invested in them, back up Wolfe's claim that architecture is now less a matter of building than of writing and drawing, its proper medium not brick but paper. (As Frank Lloyd Wright said of Le Corbusier: "Well, now he's finished one building, he'll go write four books about it".) A feeling exists that there is "something sordid about doing a lot of building". We are back again to the argument of *The Painted Word*: modern architecture, like modern art, is dominated by that "Holy Tornado" Theory.

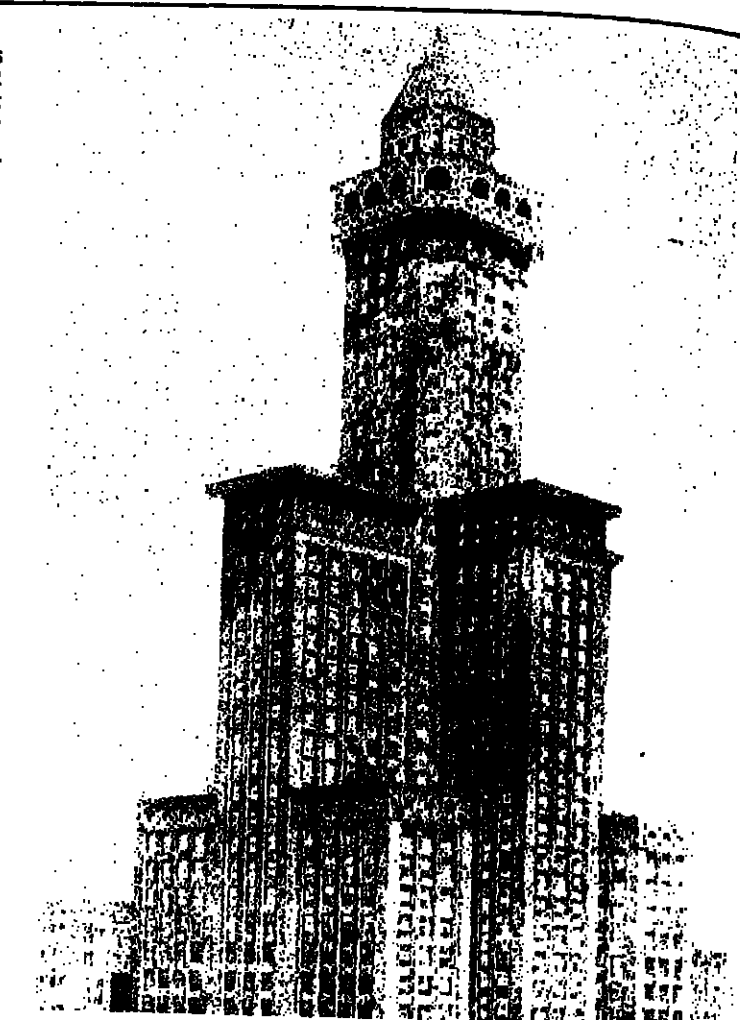
But Wolfe tries at least to end on a triumphant note, with Philip Johnson's AT & T building in New York. This survey with the fringe on the top – an arch and rectangles at the bottom rising through a Rolls-Royce radiator grille to end in the flourish of a Chippendale highboy – must be the most famous uncompleted building in the world. Whether Wolfe likes it is not entirely clear; what he does like is that its designer, Philip Johnson, a former "miesling", should have leaptfrogged all the prevailing fashions – "Look! I have established a more avant-garde position . . . way out here" – and got away with it. It is a hopeful act of apostasy in an era sapped by timidity-follower trends.

It will be apparent that much of what Wolfe says has been said before, and not only by himself in *The Painted Word*. The view that the Bauhaus architects fled from totalitarianism in Europe only to impose it in the United States was expressed

long ago, and more succinctly, by Frank Lloyd Wright. And there is nothing new either in the complaint against the monotony of current architecture – it was voiced in the nineteenth century as well as in ours. When, for example, Wolfe writes of a Mies building that "The main classroom building looked like a shoe factory. The chapel looked like a power plant. The school of architecture [looked like] a Los Angeles carwash", or claims that today "every child goes to school in a building that looks like a duplicating-machine replacement-parts wholesale distribution warehouse", he is echoing Dickens in *Hard Times* on the "severely workful" aspect of Coketown: "The jail might have been the infirmary, the infirmary might have been the jail, the town-hall might have been either, or both, or anything else." There are also the mistakes and false emphases, which even the amateur of modern architecture can't help but notice: Simon Rodia (the architect of the Towers of Watts) instead of Simone Rodilla, or the romantic notion of American exuberance which leads Wolfe not only to exaggerate European influence in America (there was already much in the indigenous skyscraper tradition to prepare the way for glass boxes and curtain walls) but to celebrate structures, like the florid lobby of John Portman's Regency O'Hare Hotel in Chicago, which of no great architectural distinction.

Yet as always with Wolfe the false premises are bound up with vigorous and often hilarious descriptive passages. His claim that the only people occupying worker housing today are the bourgeoisie and those on welfare, the workers having fled to the suburbs, is highly suspect. Equally dubious is his model of what Gropius once called the "egocentric *prima donna* architect who forces his personal fancy on an intimidated client" – nowadays both parties are likely to be faceless committees. But these are suggestive myths and they provide the book's liveliest and most witty passages, in which Wolfe takes the side of the little man against corporate bureaucracy. In Wolfe's world, occupants tired of waking at five on summer mornings defy the ban against curtains installed by architects to maintain the purity of their building's facade; they resist the regulation whiteness and bareness of their rooms by scattering brightly-coloured silk cushions about the place; office workers shoo "filing cabinets, desks, wastepaper baskets, potted plants, up against the floor-to-ceiling sheets of glass, anything to build a barrier against the panic to building that they were about to pitch headlong into the streets below." Such passages are not only humorous but show Wolfe's heart to be in the right place: while he likes about modern architecture is its arrogance of power, its totalitarian policing of the impulses of those who live in it.

But in the end, even by its own modest journalistic standards (a *Harper's* essay made into a book), *From Bauhaus to Our House* is too phillistine to carry any real conviction. Partly this is to do with Wolfe taking up a position on Modernism somewhat to the right of Evelyn Waugh and Kingsley Amis. But it is also that he seems to have no real sensitivity to the controversies surrounding them; he makes fun but doesn't take pleasure. This shows up especially in his treatment of the Segram building, which he apparently sees as just another glass box and which he gives little more than a sneering cartoon review. The Segram, though, is a building which can make even the hardest sceptic see the point of Modernist architecture. Where Ruskin in his century thought shade crucial to buildings, because it expresses "a kind of human sympathy, by measure of darkness as great as there is in human life", Mies and others have sought to transcend human frailty and doubt, creating neo-Platonic structures which "restore through their glittering surfaces the space and air they steal from the street. It is not a humane architecture, nor are its aspirations to grace, order, harmony: unknown to the human spirit. Though Wolfe may have a point in denouncing the yahoos, his book is the poorer for failing to see any virtue in the hounhnnhms.



"Every inch a proud and soaring thing", as Louis Sullivan wrote that a skyscraper must be. He and his partner, Dankmar Alder, produced a design for the *Fraternity Temple* to be erected in Chicago (1891), reproduced above from *American Architecture* 1607-1976 by Marcus Whiffen and Frederick Koeper (496pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul, £22.50, 0 7100 0813 9); though it was never built, its setback principle and central tower became the prime model for later skyscrapers, especially in New York.

## Upward, ever upward

By Stephen Gardiner

PAUL GOLDBERGER:

*The Skyscraper*, 180pp. Allen Lane, £14.95, 0 7139 1475 0

*The City Observed*: New York 347pp. Penguin, £5.95, 0 14046 495 6

The skyscraper is an American innovation, the product of nineteenth-century wealth invested in real estate, of Mr Ois's invention of the lift in 1857, of the gridiron city plan and Louis Sullivan's development of the cast-iron structure, and perhaps most of all of the American character. It looks best, as originals do, where it originated – in America, set in the context of the seemingly unending space of that enormous country.

Paul Goldberger says as much in the preface of *The Skyscraper*, his study of this unique aspect of American architectural history. In one sense, Goldberger's theme is the making of American cities over the past hundred years – an extraordinary period during which rapidly accelerating technological advance led to the abandonment of the European architectural tradition and the emergence of a wholly new urban form. Indeed, during this time, the direction of influences was reversed and the American form was copied by Europeans. In England, the trend proved disastrous: the tiny scale of the country, the ancient and irregular street patterns of the cities and the character of the people were ill-suited to the colossal size of this extravagant structure. In London, the tower block, that mini-metropolis of the skyscraper, tore the city apart. In New York, on the other hand, the skyscraper created the city.

Goldberger's study is, however, not so much a history as a commentary – as he points out, many scholarly histories have already been written. What he shows is how indigenous to America the skyscraper form is; how quickly, when the opportunity to build high arose, it was seized and exploited. The sky was indeed the limit: as early as 1875 the Western Union Building in New York was 230 feet tall, but, by 1913,

the Woolworth tower had risen to 792 feet; this record was beaten in 1930 by the Chrysler Building, which nearly broke the 1,000 foot barrier, a feat achieved by the Empire State Building one year later. And so this singular struggle for self-advertisement by big business tycoons went on until the twin towers of the World Trade Centre finally wrecked the downtown New York skyline in 1976. These towers do the Wall Street waterfront on the Hudson river much what the Montparnasse tower had done to the literary quarter in Paris two or three years before – amazingly, vintage skyscrapers that had once seemed so tall had been actually dwarfed.

Yet the real interest of this book lies in the unfolding of architectural movements during a hundred years of creating a new kind of city environment. From the examples selected here – in Manhattan, Chicago, San Francisco, St Louis, Atlanta and elsewhere – these movements are vividly presented. Limited only by the area of land (one block of the gridiron layout) and the wealth of the customer, the architects' designs reflected current fashions and styles in form and decoration – Gothic Revival, Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Modern architecture and, recently, as a reaction to the commercialized glass box of the 1960s, something between old and new (Post-Modern, to use the current jargon). All these movements are familiar on this side of the Atlantic, but in the United States they are dramatized by the sheer height of the skyscraper, and by the panache with which their characteristics are deployed. Such extraordinary forms as Johnson and Burgee's AT & T Building, now under construction, show, too, that developments of real architectural significance are emerging.

Paul Goldberger's detailed study of New York makes the perfect companion to his larger work on the Skyscraper. If the Chrysler Building remains, my favourite Manhattan structure (with Citicorp as a shunning runner-up), this affectionate guide to the city reminds one of many more old favourites. 5th Avenue, Central Park, Eldorado, gems in the East Fifties, Chelsea and Washington Square. This is a highly perceptive book with a commentary like a beautifully written diary.

## Revolt of the Wardour Street Radicals

By David Nokes

PETER BERRESFORD ELLIS:

*The Liberty Tree*, 335pp. Michael Joseph £8.50, 0 7181 2009 4

1795 was the year that Britain failed to have its revolution. The ideas of Tom Paine, the examples of the American and French revolutions, and the organization of the Corresponding Societies were insufficient to dislodge, or even to disturb seriously, the oligarchical régime in these islands. "The Beast and the Whore rule without control" wrote Blake in 1798. The reasons for that failure, and its historical consequences, are the subject of E. P. Thompson's classic study *The Making of the English Working Class*. Peter Berresford Ellis's book *The Liberty Tree* is an unacknowledged novelization of Thompson's theme, taking its title from the first section of Thompson's work.

Ellis has selected from Thompson's cast of unsung millions a single sturdy proletarian, Tom Dawtry, whose career embodies the ideals, aspirations and final disappointment of the democratic movement of the

1790s. Sussex-born Tom's consciousness is traumatized early on by the sight of an old sheep stealer being pilloried and branded to death. Soon afterwards his mother is trampled underfoot by the local squire out fox-hunting. Befriended by a radical book-seller, Tom is introduced to the writings of Paine and Rousseau, and his sense of natural justice develops a specific ideological colouring.

In a historical note Ellis describes his book as "a work of fiction which has a firm basis in fact". He might have been more explicit. Not only are several of the historical figures in this novel, such as Thomas Hardy, John Blinn and John Thelwall, familiar to us from Thompson's works; the language which they are described also has a distinctly second-hand feel. This is Thompson on Thelwall:

When spies attended his lectures, he turned the tables by lecturing on the spy system; when an attempt was made to provoke riot, he led the audience quietly out of the hall . . . His command over crowds was great, and when at the final demonstration against the Two Acts the cry went up of 'Soldiers, soldiers!' he is said to have turned a wave of panic into a wave of solidarity, by preaching the society's doctrine of fraternization with the troops.

This is Ellis's version:

When known spies and informers attended his lectures he would make them feel uncomfortable by lecturing on the spy system. When an attempt was made to provoke a riot on one occasion he managed to lead his audience quietly from the hall. He had a surprising command over crowds, and when at a demonstration against Government policy, a cry went up that soldiers were about to attack, he turned the wave of panic into a demonstration of unity.

"Borrowings" of this kind can be found throughout the novel. Whenever a historical figure is introduced, or a sequence of historical events related, one has an unmistakable sense of *ditto* *ditto*. Exactly how Ellis goes about "novelizing" Thompson can be seen in another small incident. Thompson writes:

The King's carriage window was fractured, probably by a pebble, but he is alleged to have gasped out as he reached the House of Lords: 'My Lord, I, I, I've been shot at!'

In Ellis's version the historian's cautious allegation becomes fact, but he exploits the novelist's privilege of omniscience for no better purpose than to describe the King's complexion:

Suddenly something sped by the

King's cheek and disappeared out of the open window opposite. 'By God!' cried Onslow. 'That's a shot!' The King paled. 'I heard no sound of a shot. . . . The King rushed, seething with indignation, into the chamber of the House of Lords. 'My lords,' he raged, 'I've been shot at!'

Thus, although the work is full of accurate details, it lacks any of the sense of imaginative, or even historical authenticity that one finds in, say, Thomas Flanagan's *The Year of the French*, a novel about exactly the same period. Characters are perfunctorily drawn, and Tom's brief affairs with Mollie, Elise and Amelia are merely sensual interludes to space out the main revolutionary action. Ellis seems to believe that his theme is so strong that he need not fuss over giving substance to his characters, or recreating events from the inside. Instead he draws stern lessons from history, offering thinly disguised parallels with some current preoccupations of the labour movement.

Despard, representing a militant tendency within the London Corresponding Society, argues that parliamentary activity is useless, and advocates instead an organization outside parliament. When he adds "We must follow the example of our Irish comrades who are fighting not only for their social liberties but for

their national liberties", the message is fairly clear. Throughout the novel the familiar formulae of agitprop are given a curious garb of fustian old-spoken. Tom, now a militant himself, dismisses the fair-weather radicalism of an effete intellectual like Wordsworth in Wardour Street rhetoric: "He is lapping the boots of portly George and the insidious Pitt".

Ellis accepts the interpretation that the revolutionary movement of the 1790s failed because it underestimated the fierce nationalism which could be stirred up to defeat all attempts at working-class unity. The most interesting sections of the novel come when Tom encounters the separatist movements in Brittany and Wales. Surprisingly there is no mention of Methodism here, according to most analysts, played an equally powerful part in undermining revolutionary sentiments. The most puzzling feature of the novel is Ellis's decision to give his fictional establishment mole, the spy who betrays the Corresponding Society, the name Stafford Thistlewood. Anyone familiar with the politics of this period will remember that Arthur Thistlewood was indeed a radical leader, who was finally beheaded in 1820 for his part in the Cato Street Conspiracy. This confusion, which can hardly be accidental, serves no useful purpose: it is simply Ellis taking a liberty which history denied him.

## From the middens of outworn faith

By Peter Kemp

ROBERTSON DAVIES:

*The Rebel Angels*, 326pp. Allen Lane, £6.50, 0 7139 1473 4

Mixing Paracelsus and the paranormal, Rabelais and Romanies, *The Rebel Angels* is a cerebral extravaganza designed both to mock and eulogize academic life. Sardonic surveying the groves of academe, it also admiringly explores some of the more curious branches of learning, as well as digging energetically to expose the resilient roots of the university system.

His sharp, spectacle gaze lights everywhere on reminders of the Middle Ages. Setting the cloisters aflutter is a renegade monk, once a specialist in scholastic philosophy. Another Fellow, whose room is decorated with alchemical apparatus, is engaged in an Abelard-and-Héloïse affair with a young research student.

university", we're told, "it always retains a strong hint of its medieval origins." Set up to demonstrate this is a Canadian college, Saint John and the Holy Ghost, whose "surroundings were as Gothic as the nineteenth century could make them". Here, amid a mock-antique conglomeration of arch and oriel, a crabbed crew of largely celibate scholars wrangle and rummage and ruminate. Cataloguing their broodings and feudings is one of the novel's two narrators, Darcourt, an amiably nosy scholar-person bent on penning a dossier of donnish oddity called *The New Aubrey*.

His sharp, spectacle gaze lights everywhere on reminders of the Middle Ages. Setting the cloisters aflutter is a renegade monk, once a specialist in scholastic philosophy. Another Fellow, whose room is decorated with alchemical apparatus, is engaged in an Abelard-and-Héloïse affair with a young research student.

The events that dot the college calendar – from the formal saturnalia of Guest Nights to regular student disorderliness – are shown to have a lengthy pedigree. Scholarly mendacity, it is pointed out, now takes the form of wheedling to government. The medieval readiness to offer hospitality to the itinerant huckster finds its present-day equivalent in fat fees paid to "a wandering Englishman" peddling gimmick reminiscences of Bloom'sbury.

The importance of contact with the past is both stressed and demonstrated in *The Rebel Angels*. Its matter and manner part archaic and unexpected sources. Rabelais, besides contributing a long-lost manuscript that is central to the plot, has provided hints for the novel's episodes of erudite vaudeville and pedantic excess. Paracelsus and scriptural apocrypha supply much of its imagery.

Connected with this line of thought is the belief that the personality can only thrive by sinking into the deposits of the past like a plant into loam. Of most relevance here is the book's other narrator, Maria Thelwack, half-researcher and half-Romany, literally a scholar-gypsy. In the early stages of the novel, she is the embodiment of brainy industry. Through her quick-witted flexibility and toughness, Davies displays the importance and exhilaration of vigorously exercising the intellect. And it is wisely-read Maria who elucidates the novel's title. The "rebel angels" were Samahazi and Azazel who – according to Apocryphal belief – "came to earth and taught tongues and healing and laws and hygiene – taught everything". This, Maria feels, is "the explanation of the ori-

gin of universities". And, in the pages of a favourite author, Paracelsus, she comes upon a reference that further encourages her notion of academic life as something heavenly: "The striving for wisdom is the second paradise of the world". But Maria, like the university she venerates, is a hybrid of ancient and modern. Through her Romany mother (a portrait of further news), she is linked to the gypsies, the medieval people, in a "modern world". As the narrative progresses, she learns that to have a really fruitful future, she must draw emotionally on this inheritance. Finally, in keeping with the book's emphasis on the productiveness of apparently incongruous blends, she marries an unexpected partner.

The novel itself grafts together two extremely different literary traditions. Like the contemporary campus-novel it fitfully resembles, it offers satiric scenes from modern academic life. Like the medieval works Davies finds so engrossing, it is crammed with weird lore and lumber, cluttered with outlandish but absorbing information. Eccentricity – seen as the essence of the scholar – is what links these disparate strains. On the one hand, the book derives comedy from the cranky idiosyncrasies of its obsessed academics. On the other, it argues that for serious intellectual achievement there must be studied individuality, avoidance of the usual. Quirkiness and real originality – inseparable components of Davies's imagination – also twine beguilingly together in the academic world he portrays with such bolsterous appreciation.

## Criminal proceedings

BILL WALSH:

*Cheat*, 192pp. Robert Hale, £6.50, 0 7091 0550 8

Some cunning adversary is out to undermine the reputation of champion competition angler, Mal Wilkins, setting him up to be discovered as a cheat. But it takes more than a fish in his thermos flask to disconcert Mal, who digs deep and uncovers a very unsavoury can of worms. This is Bill Walsh's second angling thriller, with a bit more variety in plot and a bit more variety in intrigue and setting. He could easily become fishing's Dick Francis.

BILL PRONZINI:

*Labyrinth*, 186pp. Robert Hale, £6.25, 0 7091 9269 X

Bill Pronzini's unnamed San Francisco private investigator is not in the typical mould: he is in his mid-fifties, and reads nothing but crime pulp magazines of the 1930s. But he copes well enough when a client is arrested for murder and an involved California man factor has to be sorted out. A well-written novel, individual and atmospheric enough to stand up to the inevitable comparisons with Chandler and Ross Macdonald.

T. J. Binyon

"A REMARKABLE EXERCISE IN FICTION AND HISTORIOGRAPHY... Part history, part science lesson, part philosophical treatise, *Night Thoughts* is a brilliant piece of scholarship and a profoundly moving portrait of a man and his time." – *Time Magazine*, March 1, 1982

"AN ARTFUL EXPERIMENT in writing the history of science... A sensitive and compelling work about the confrontation of a classical spirit with the raw disorders of the modern scientific age." – *New York Times Book Review*, February 7, 1982



**Night Thoughts of a Classical Physicist**  
Russell McCormmach

£10.60 Illustrated March

Harvard University Press  
126 Buckingham Palace Road  
London SW1W 9SD

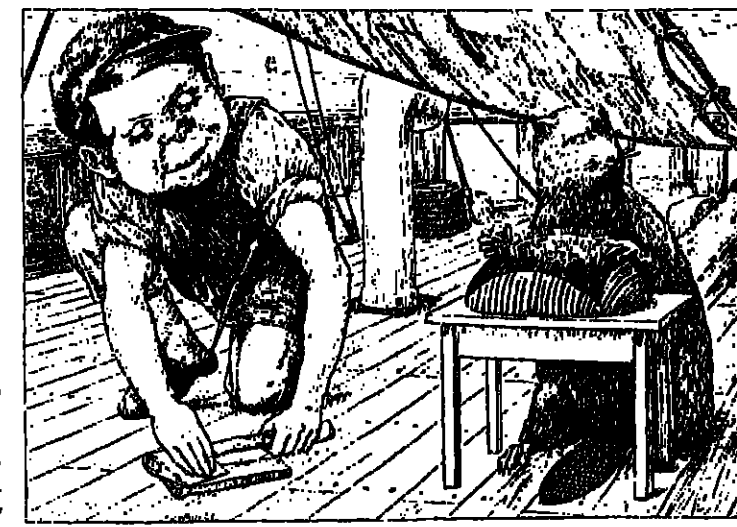
Author's drawing after Edward Munch's oil painting in 1906 of the great theoretical physicist Fritz Hasenbach.



# TLS Children's books

## The childhood of history

By Julia Briggs



The sinister butcher and the unaccountably shy Beaver, members of the crew of ten who hunted the Snark. One of Henry Holiday's illustrations to Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark*. The picture is taken from a "centennial edition" of the poem, edited by James Tans and John Doolley (Los Altos, California: William Kaufmann Inc. £13.55, 0 91322 36 X) which has recently been published in a limited edition of 5,000 copies. The books, which contain a facsimile of the first edition of *The Hunting of the Snark*, Martin Gardner's annotated edition of the poem, an essay by Charles Mitchell describing the collaboration between Dodgson and Holiday over the illustrations and a listing of editions of the Snark by Selwyn H. Goodacre, is illustrated by some of Holiday's original sketches and drawings from the Howe-West collection at Bryn Mawr College.

F. J. HARVEY DARTON (Editor): *Children's Books in England*. Third edition revised by Brian Alderson. 394pp. Cambridge University Press. £12.95, 0 521 24020 4.

For the past half-century, Harvey Darton's *Children's Books in England* has been acknowledged the classic work on its subject. Though it made little impact on publication in 1932, and sold slowly at first, it was re-issued in 1958, and now the Cambridge University Press (anticipating, perhaps, the forthcoming *Oxford Companion to Children's Literature*) had produced a third version edited by Brian Alderson, who has capably ironed out a number of minor muddles, enlivened the text with many new illustrations, and added some fresh material on its author. Darton's history has been acknowledged the classic work on its subject. Though it made little impact on publication in 1932, and sold slowly at first, it was re-issued in 1958, and now the Cambridge University Press (anticipating, perhaps, the forthcoming *Oxford Companion to Children's Literature*) had produced a third version edited by Brian Alderson, who has capably ironed out a number of minor muddles, enlivened the text with many new illustrations, and added some fresh material on its author.

pranks played by Jack with his pipe; when his own stepmother fails to keep him in order:

When'er she looks upon me so  
Thinking to keep me under  
I with her bum may then let go  
And crack like roaring thunder.

Such a combination of vulgarity and effective impertinence had an obvious appeal for children. A similarly scatological nursery rhyme about the Robin Redbreast ("Niddle noddle wren his head, / And Poop went his Hole") is referred to with great obliquity, although we are assured that "outspeakness did not necessarily come from a nasty mind"; nor has his modern editor thought fit to elucidate this allusion.

Rather more serious than the occasional note of prissiness is the fact that the passage of time since publication has rendered Darton's whole title misleading - it might more accurately be retitled *Early Children's Books in England*. Although the narrative ends at 1900, the later coverage, when the steady stream of children's books had become a flood, is increasingly inadequate, and the fine judgment that could recognize Mrs Sherwood's English as "little short of majestic in its economy and plainness", despite her repellent harshness, seems to disintegrate entirely when confronted with the works of his contemporaries. Thus Kipling's *Just So Stories* stand condemned for their "crude avuncularity", and their author is surprisingly said to have shown himself a "conventional Victorian in them". Similarly Beatrix Potter, whose prose is just as sure as that of Miss Edgeworth or Miss Bar-

bauld, is only referred to indirectly, and then, quite incongruously, in connection with dolls, when Darton describes the Golliwog, the Teddy Bear and the Peter Rabbit as "grotesques copied from fictional models". That tough-minded lady would have scarcely been pleased to find herself mentioned in such a connection. Though absorbedly fascinated by small live animals she took no interest in dolls, even as a child, and those that appear within her pages, Lucinda and her cook Jane, or the German police doll in *Ginger and Pickles* are notable only for their characteristic woodenness. Brian Alderson makes belated amends in an anxious footnote on Kipling and a generous paragraph on Beatrix Potter in his appendix, "Victorian and Edwardian Times", in which he attempts to redress some of the imbalances in Darton's treatment of the nineteenth century. Even so, he can scarcely, within the narrow confines of his appendix, chronicle in detail the period from the 1890s commonly known as the golden age of children's literature, and about which a prospective reader might reasonably have expected more information.

Of course it was never part of Darton's intention to characterize the work of individual writers, even though he could on occasion do so with great brilliance, and particularly in the century or so from 1740 in which he was most at home. Major writers, in any case, commonly refuse to conform to expectations and so demand a disproportionate share of individual attention. Instead he focused on the books themselves, finding in them "a minor chapter in the history of social life". His central

thesis was "that children's books were always the scene of a battle between instruction and amusement, between restraint and freedom, between hesitant morality and spontaneous happiness". This topic is one of perennial interest, and can be made to indicate the ways in which different generations or social groups have dealt with the barbaric, refractory nature of their offspring, and how they viewed the necessity (as it so often seemed) of training or disciplining them, in the interests of a better society or a quieter life. Mrs Sherwood's fierce insistence that "All children are by nature evil" may even be due for a come-back; it might even be welcomed by those harassed and guilt-ridden parents who regard their children's fractiousness as, in some obscure sense, their own fault.

In one way or another, every children's book is a coded message from the world of the adult to that of the child, promoting the outlook or habits that their elders are anxious to recommend and deprecating the behaviour they wish to discourage; they are thus part of a more general effort to mould the atavistic child into a more acceptable adult. The element of naked instruction reached its zenith in the blatantly improving works of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, with figures like Mrs Trimmer (the Mary Whitehouse of her day) who hoped it might be possible to eject from the nursery, at least that sickly indulgence of the mind, the "prejudicial Nonsense" of fiction. Mrs Sherwood's morbid lessons, which found uninhibited expression in *The Fairchild Family*, were also intended to instill a personal morality founded on

guilt. Yet even an enlightened and emancipated writer like E. Nesbit, who so forcefully attacked her predecessors for their merciless wielding of terrors, was herself inclined to inculcate notions of manly honour and decency, and not being a "nasty sneak". As an early Fabian she occasionally drew her young readers' attention to the age's poverty, industrial disease and urban squalor; on the other hand, practical jokes on the housemaid were merely regarded as a sign of high spirits. Social history, as a history of such complex distinctions of attitude, or *mentalités*, is written into children's books at the deepest, because least conscious, level. Darton's focus on the delicate interface between instruction and amusement as of central interest to the social historian is arguably his greatest contribution to the subject.

Although early chapters examine animal fables and medieval romances, Darton considered that the history of children's books really began with John Newbery's *A Little Pretty Pocket Book* of 1744, though inevitably such a simplification is gently qualified in Brian Alderson's painstaking notes. The publication of books for children in the eighteenth century reflected a changing view of childhood, that began to regard the young as a quite distinct sub-species, requiring different mental fodder if they were to develop and thrive; while such an attitude was potentially liberating, it was also diminishing. More freedom meant less responsibility, and the early modern child, who had sometimes been treated like a man from the age of seven (and, on occasion, been expected to behave like one), now had a long wait to regain the privileges thus forfeited, even though the strains were correspondingly lessened. It was not, of course, that there had previously been no books for children, but rather that all books had previously been for children, there being no clear-cut distinction between adults and children as regards reading, any more than as regards games or clothes. Young and old alike enjoyed histories, philosophies, anecdotes and fairy-tales, just as both played at cards, tennis and bowls. Gradually in the seventeenth century, however, less sophisticated tastes tended to sink from aristocratic to bourgeois circles (as Philippe Ariès has shown), and thence to rustics, finally becoming the exclusive province of childhood.

It is hard to know exactly what most children read before Newbery and his contemporaries began to turn out their tales of Goody Two Shoes and the Babes in the Wood. Few

## commentary

### Iterative domesticity

By Michael Mason

Home Sweet Home  
BBC TV

Some years ago Mike Leigh's film *The Kiss of Death* was screened at the NFT. Several members of the cast were in the audience; they had turned up simply because this was a rare opportunity to see a film that was important to them - as little-known, or non-professional, actors. Their presence created a good deal of friendly interest, and in the bar afterwards they were eyed just as curiously and admiringly as some more established actors would be. It is hard to envisage a similar response to the performers in Leigh's new film for television: a fact which is instructive about the recent tendency of his work. Not much interest would attach to the flesh-and-blood presence of the three postmen, the two wives, the daughter, and the social workers who are the main figures in *Home Sweet Home*. In terms of their performances, this is entirely to the actors' credit. So convincing were they that there was scarcely any sense of a feat of improvisation.

But if Leigh's characters are now less grotesque, they are also less interesting to our feelings and judgment than they used to be. The early work produces a special, highly unusual effect: the spectator feels at once extremely derisive about the characters, and painfully affectionate towards them. This blend of the ludicrous with the poignant, which made Leigh such a remarkable director, no longer seems to interest him. In *Home Sweet Home* there is scarcely anything that would suggest his capacity to wrench our feelings paradoxically. The figures are not even very comic, though there is certainly still ludicrous. There is perhaps more suffering in this film than in any of its predecessors, and this suffering is even more coldly regarded. Everything extraneous to a mood of contemptuous despair about the characters has been pared away.

The trouble is that the materials of Leigh's world, which have remained very much the same, won't sustain

this new kind of feeling. *Home Sweet Home* is about three abysmal marriages, lived out by parties who are preternaturally uncharitable and stupid, in surroundings of monotonous tastelessness. Monotony, or iteration, is the key to the film's structure - which is a series of emphatic rhymes between domestic events in the three families or groups, and between their physical circumstances - their houses being as uniform, inside and out, as the slots into which the three postmen sort their mail. (And these are not the postmen of popular imagination whose lives are refreshed by exogamy: the one who gets an adulterous "leg over" does so with a colleague's wife.)

But it is all too insistent: both the insistence on monotony, and the insistence that home is not sweet but sour (and violent), sex selfish and cruel, and altruism bogus. The last point is made through the figures of the two social workers; Leigh prepares his theme with the first of these (a personable but negligent woman worker), and delivers his simple, destructive verdict with the second - a male whose fatuous politicized jargon sounds over the closing credits. This particular device brings into question the grounds of

Leigh's sour vision (the sourest apparently making its appeal to nothing more than someone's silly verbal habits) and, more seriously, his artistic touch. There are several episodes in the film which the directing of actors and camera, makes far too readable, as if Leigh badly underestimated his audience's capacities: the exchange between Stanley and Melody about being in prison, for example.

Leigh has resorted less to his much-reported techniques of preliminary improvisation in recent years, and the suspicion must arise that this is connected with the loss of emotional complexity his work has undergone. Perhaps he is a more reductive director than he appeared: the complications being contributed by his actors. One scene in *Home Sweet Home* tries for the old poignancy: when Stanley and his sensitive, unhappy daughter talk in his back garden (Leigh's women are generally all harpies now). But even this is too emphatic - too clearly a moment of contrived feeling, of escape from the world of bickering imbecility. More than in the past, Leigh now tells his actors what to do. Unhappily, this has also encouraged the habit of telling audiences what to think.

absence, leaving McKellen's Lawrence coughing now towards his last, almost cheerfully impotent.

So settings and cameo performances are what it amounts to - Janet Suzman, Ava Gardner, Penelope Keith and McKellen himself all rather good, but separately, and as it were chastely, good with hardly any connection between them than they have so patently stepped out of. Not the sex war, but *déjà vu* is the order of the day, and the ending with Frieda comfortably fixed up with her handsome obedient Captain, Mabel with her usual Indian, Brett with her hearing aid and Lawrence snugly tucked up in his urn, is bleakly cheerful. That the ashes nearly get left on a railway station (again a snapshot from life according to Frieda) is of a piece with the film's general drift.

know - and more to the point the film doesn't either, for all its meticulous historicity - what Lawrence's power to offend consisted in.

This, of course, is ultimately why *Priest of Love* is a failure, and why it's in some ways a rather honourable one. It is embarrassed by Lawrence's sexual apathyism on the one hand and shamed by current cinematic versions of liberation on the other, thus becoming a more or less wretched joke, with coy sidelong shots of the manuscript (words like "belly" and "buttocks") and slow caressing close-ups of type imprinting sheet after sheet. This is the film's major climax, a vulgar pun, perhaps, in another context, but here a piece of gently despairing tact. And the ironies close in: sex, named and pictured, real and faked, has become so unmythical that it signifies by its

### Revivifying old photographs

By Lorna Sage

Priest of Love  
Various Cinemas

Perhaps *Priest of Love* (which is based on Harry T. Moore's biography of D. H. Lawrence, or rather, Alan Plater's screenplay derived from it) would have been better if it had been - as some reviewers have unkindly suggested it is - a farce. If Plater and director Christopher Miles had meant to debunk or debunk the mythic Lawrence, at least we'd have had some savagery. Whereas what the film presents is a frail, lyrical-cynical portrait of Lawrence adrift in the Jazz Age, a Nottinghamshire lad strayed into the avant garde, beset by matrimony and censorship, and distractingly pretty locations.

It's partly done by bringing old photographs to life, so that the cast are continually tethered to documentary roles, and everyone matches up with their images from the time (we begin in 1924, with Lawrence six years from death, on his way to Taos, New Mexico) with uncanny accuracy. Our first glimpses of red-bellied, tense Ian McKellen haloed against the cabin's porthole, and of Janet Suzman as Frieda scrambling in a bunk, neatly dumbstruck the shape of things to come. Fustian might object that Janet Suzman isn't quite blowsy enough for Frieda, but her dying-dahlia hairdo does the trick. And Penelope Keith as deaf, adoring "Brett" (the Hon. Dorothy), the only disciple to follow the prophet to the new world, is splendidly persuasive. As is Ava Gardner as Dodge Lubin, waiting at the other end and licking her chops over her captive gurn.

The effect isn't hard to imagine. Sample dialogue (horse-riding scene in New Mexico, Lawrence spurring his mount ahead): "He doesn't like a woman to lead the way" (Frieda): "But he doesn't know the way" (Mabel), smile from Frieda. Small wonder that one of the first things "Lorenzo" does in Taos is mess up one of Mabel's ethnic soirées by overturning the strawberry bowl into the desert grit. He's made to seem (and there's plenty of documentary evidence for this too) a kind of desperate boy, while the women seem to be already, posing to have their pictures taken without him. Flash-back - nude bathing with his Cornish-farmer olum, a nursery tantrum

### Not rocking the boat

By T. J. Binyon

Guys and Dolls  
Olivier Theatre

*Guys and Dolls* is based on a Damon Runyon short story, "The Idyll of Miss Sarah Brown", but Frank Loesser (who wrote the music and lyrics) and Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows (who wrote the book) prettified the original up more than somewhat. They gave Nathan Detroit, who runs the oldest established permanent floating crap game in New York, a girl friend, brought in more guys and dolls, and dreamt up a good schmaltzy finale. They also ruined the point of the story. It is all very far from that typical Runyon view of life expressed elsewhere by a characteristic cliché: "I long ago came to the conclusion that all life is six to five to assume that better odds prevail; if by Runyon he been violated, it has at least been for a good cause: the result is undoubtedly one of the best musicals around."

The National Theatre Company has done its first musical over, really, proud. Richard Eyre's direction is effective and imaginative, and John Gutter has designed a stunning set whose metamorphoses good - and deserved - their own round of applause at the performance I saw.

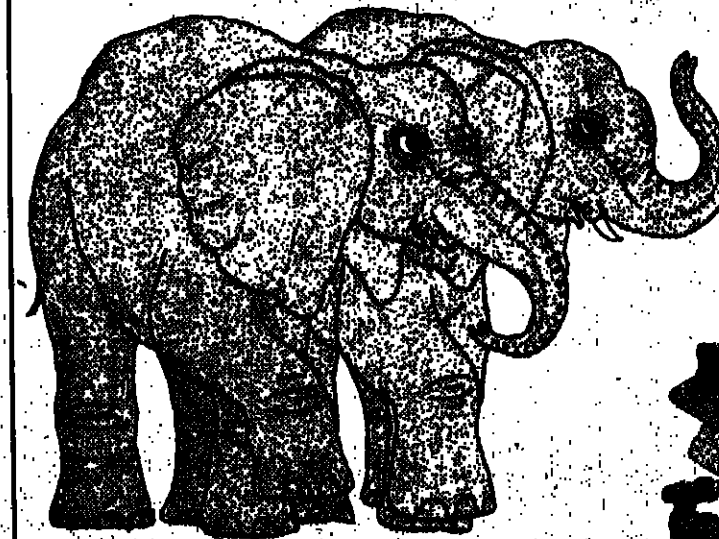
As Miss Adelaide, engaged to Nathan for fourteen years, Julia McKenzie belts her numbers out in the authentic manner, and for "Adelaide's Lament" does a good "aimative warble as well. Julie Covington plays Sarah, the mission worker; her very individual, plangent tone makes for some touching love scenes, and she does the singing-whills-drunk number, "If I Were a Bell". Intoxicatingly, vocally, Ian Charleson (as Nathan Detroit) and Bob Hoskins (as Nathan Detroit) are less impressive, but more than adequate. The contrast between the short, chunky Nathan, fizzing with misdirected energy, and the tall, willowy Sky, so laid back as to be practically horizontal, works well too. Nicely-Nicely Johnson (David Healy) and Lieutenant Brannigan (Harry Towse) also catch the eye, and the whole company has been impressively drilled by David Toguri.

Yet, for all that, the hairs on the back of the neck remained disappointingly quiescent throughout the first night. The production seemed not to be punching its full weight. That last bit of oomph, of bazz, was missing. Only when Nicely-Nicely took the crap shooters and mission workers assembled in the through their imitation spiritual, "Sit Down, You're Rocking the Boat", did the temperature reach melting point. It seems almost as if too much care and reverence have been brought to bear on the work, result-

ing in a production that gives the impression it's under glass. And while it may be excitingly and dashing experimentally to stage an American musical on the South Bank, there are built-in drawbacks. Halfway through the final dance number the first night audience suddenly broke into applause: not in recognition of some communal nifty bit of footwork, or in anticipation of the end, but rather, it seemed, in thankful appreciation of the fact that a lot of National Theatre actors were pretending to be Broadway hoofers.

The George Orwell Memorial Fund, made possible by Bernard Crick's donation of the English book rights of his *George Orwell: A Life*, has been established in order to encourage research or writing on the relationship between politics and literature of a kind that Orwell might have thought interesting were he alive. Grants will be given to postgraduate students working at either Birkbeck College or University College London, on some literary topic concerning politics, or on some political topic involving the examination of imaginative literature. Grants will also be available to young writers who wish to complete a novel or a play about political dilemmas. The first awards will be made in June 1983 and further information can be obtained from the Clerk to the Governors, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HX.

## Look out for Bodley Head books!



Pat Hutchins  
One Hunter

One hunter walks through the jungle. He doesn't notice the two elephants, three giraffes or the four ostriches, five antelopes, six tigers, seven crocodiles, eight monkeys, nine snakes or ten parrots... but they all see him! A brilliant, full-colour counting book that makes a true adventure of one to ten.

Shigeo Watanabe  
I'm the King of the Castle! & I can do it!

Illustrated by Yasuo Ohtomo

In *I'm the King of the Castle!* Little Bear has a lovely, messy time at the sandpit; in *I Can Do It!* he discovers he's much better at flying a toy aeroplane than at skateboarding.

370 30920 0 £3.95

370 30912 x, 370 30911 1 £3.25 each

CHATTO & WINDUS

Leslie Chapman  
Waste Away

The 'red tape rebel', widens the debate he began in 1978 with *Your Disobedient Servant* and issues a devastating challenge to public authority can afford to ignore.

'Let us hope that there will always be a supply of people of sturdy and unbending common sense, like Mr Chapman.'

TLS  
0 7011 2629 9 224pp  
April £7.95

Bernard Malamud  
Collected Works

Rembrandt's Hat

'A new collection of stories by Bernard Malamud is an event no one should miss. He can pack more into a few pages than most writers into a novel.'

Nina Bayden  
0 7011 2450 4 224pp  
April £7.50

Jacqueline Simms  
Unsolicited Gift

'The arrival of an adventurous new writer of indisputable quality.'

New Standard  
'The most astute and sensitive first novel that I have read for a very long time.'

Martin Seymour-Smith  
0 7011 2816 7 180pp  
Just published £8.95

Iain Browning  
Petra

In this completely updated edition, Iain Browning reveals the splendour and fascination of the most remarkable ancient city in the world.

'His sensitive and expert reconstruction inspires a quality of restless longing to see and know.'

Observer  
0 7011 2822 1 256pp  
Over 200 illustrations plus 6pp colour plates  
April £12.50

Anna Freud  
International Psychoanalytical Library  
Psychoanalytic Psychology of Normal Development

A collection of writings which reflects the author's interest in applying her psychoanalytic findings to an understanding of normal development.

0 7012 0543 1 400pp  
IPAL No. 112  
Already published £16

THE HOGARTH PRESS

مكتبة الأصل





**Three stories with the same end...**  
Rosemary Sutcliffe 95p

SUN HORSE, MOON HORSE  
Rosemary Sutcliffe  
Chosen as a Children's Book of the Year, this is a powerful recreation of the Early Iron Age horse people. 'Strong with poetic logic and bright with imaginative truth, Miss Sutcliffe's best book for a long time.'  
Leon Garfield, The Guardian  
Age: 11 plus

A LITTLE SILVER TRUMPET  
Thea Remett  
Moving to a grim tenement in Victorian London is only the start of trouble for the Jessop family and soon Alison is fighting to prove her mother's innocence of a robbery charge. Based on the acclaimed BBC television series.  
Age: 9-12 years

MORTIMER'S PORTRAIT ON GLASS  
Joan Aiken  
Illustrated by Quentin Blake  
Another hilarious adventure in this popular Jackanory series featuring Arabol and her irrepressible pet raven, Mortimer. Quentin Blake's manic illustrations perfectly capture the atmosphere when Mortimer's vanity leads to disaster.  
Age: 7-10 years

...a livelier mind!

## THE HANDBOOK OF TENNIS

PAUL DOUGLAS

£10.95

Foreword by John McEnroe. Preface by Dan Maskell. For every player - the complete guide to all aspects of the game. Hundreds of step-by-step drawings and photos show how to become expert in every technique. \*With 1800 illustrations and 32 pages of full colour

## THE GIGANTIC HIT

MICHAEL HARDCASTLE

£4.95

A tense and exciting story of team rivalry; the Innings of a lifetime and crickething history in the making.

## MARTY AND THE DRAGON

EDITED BY STEPHEN BARNETT

£4.95

A collection of stories, plays, poems and things-to-do originally published in the New Zealand Department of Education's much-praised *School Journal*. \*Illustrated in colour and black and white.

## TEN CATS AND THEIR TALES

MARTIN LEMAN

£3.95

The artist responsible for *Ster Cats* and *Comic and Outrageous Cats* presents his latest frolic: ten sleek cats each with a tale to tell to amuse and delight the reader.

PELHAM BOOKS

bothered to record their reading and some of those who did were scarcely typical: Montaigne at seven preferred Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to the stories of Lancelot du Lac, Amadis de Gaule and Huon of Bordeaux that so delighted his contemporaries. John Bunyan's tastes were predictably more representative. In *Sighs from Hell* he recalled his early in-patience with God's message for man.

Alas, what is the Scripture, give me a Ballad or a News-Book. George on Horseback or *Bevis of Southampton*, give me some book that teaches curious Arts, that tells of old Fables; but for the Holy Scriptures I cared not.

*Bevis of Southampton* was a long-established favourite - Shakespeare's Poor Tom sang snatches of it, while the essayist Steele recorded his godson's keen interest in that hero's "passionate temper". Indeed *Bevis* was famous for fits of uncontrollable fury in which he killed dragons and broke out of the deepest dungeons, temper tantrums on a spectacular scale that had somehow been harnessed to positive ends - small wonder that such a figure appealed to the young. Most of the popular heroes, whether champions like *Bevis* or Guy of Warwick, or diminutive tricksters like Jack the Giant-killer or Tom Thumb, overcame insuperable odds, thus expressing fantasies of power and triumph - fantasies as consoling to the helpless or the oppressed as to the child in the world of arbitrary adult giants, the Olympians, as Kenneth Grahame termed them. Later, Robinson Crusoe and the Swiss Family Robinson fulfilled that dream of mastering circumstances, of proving oneself entirely self-reliant, that compensated imaginatively for the child's extensive dependence on others.

It was in his attitude to the darker and more inward aspects of the imagination that Danton most showed himself a man of his times, essential-

ly a cheerful rationalist for whom Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll were the great liberators, their delightfully self-contained nonsense accorded happily with the pleasure principle. Danton was scrupulously just to the moralists in his assessment of their power and vision, but it was one that repelled him, and the natural religiosity, vengefulness and morbidity of children eluded him entirely. That they might enjoy reading gruesome deathbed scenes, or linger with reluctant fascination over the terrors of Apollyon, or even the dismemberment of the scissor man from *Screwdriver* (here dismissed as "splendidly hilarious"), never seems to have occurred to him. William Golding's unforgettable essay on his childhood, "The Ladder and the Tree", brilliantly suggests the way a rationalist childhood of the 1920s only served to throw into sharper relief the inexplicable terrors of the graveyard that abutted on to the author's early home. One function of children's books, and no inconsiderable one, is to allow such feelings play in a manageable or controllable context.

Inevitably the passage of time makes it possible to consider the historian's bias historically. On the whole the generosity and common sense that characterize Danton's book have worn well. Brian Alderson's revisions are thorough and careful, occasionally erring, as Danton himself had done, on the allusive side: it is, for example, unilluminating to tell us that Danton's personal troubles may "be glimpsed behind the facade of his second novel", since the book is now quite unfamiliar. But this new edition is a delight to handle and look at, and *Children's Books in England* remains an invaluable source for anyone interested in the subject.

The only exception to this poor foreign coverage nowadays is the large number of American and Australian children's books currently available, and the few that feature life in the New Commonwealth. There are also a number of novels set in Nazi Germany - a twelve-year period that retentive young readers and viewers should by now know more about than all the rest of world history put together. The only other British literature that regularly mentions our closest Common Market partners is the comic strip, where every week Britain still pulverizes the Krauts, Sausage-eaters or Hun, plus a few Italians, occasionally with a little help from French or Dutch resistance workers.

This regressive insularity is not repeated in Europe itself. Perhaps some 15 per cent of all children's literature in Western Europe is now translated from British sources with Anthony Buckridge's prep schoolboy Jennings and Enid Blyton's *Petit Outi* especially popular with their rather particular messages about Britain today. But there are also other, more contemporary writers translated abroad as a matter of course. The fact that our own bookshelves by contrast remain parochially bound to the English-speaking world does not simply imply a loss to readers of the type of picturesque detail that Lucy Fitch Perkins once provided in her interminable series about twins from different countries. It also means that British children have little opportunity to come across the intriguing differences in national attitude that can make writers like Tolstoy, Stendhal and Marquez so extra interesting to adult readers.

An island race must be careful about cutting off its young in this way, and even if geography, books and television travel programmes have improved, the actual experience of identifying with someone from another country through reading a novel still tends to make the most vivid, imaginative impact at a formative age. Problems about novels in the American libraries, or even the current dearth on library shelves of good modern children's stories set in any part of the non-English speaking world at all.

## The onset of maturity

By Jennifer Moody

LOIS DUNCAN:

I Know What You Did Last Summer Hamish Hamilton. £4.95.

0 241 10723 7

KENNETH WOOD:

Shining Armour

Julia MacRae Books. £6.25.

0 86203 059 5

Lois Duncan, who lives, works and sets her novels in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is a recent but immediately successful arrival on the British scene. Popular as she is, not only with the soft underbelly of the literary world, the children's book reviewers, but with the most hardened carapace, the teenage library book borrower, her novel of 1973, *I Know What You Did Last Summer* has now been published in England.

*I Know What You Did Last Summer* is the story of four teenagers, Julie, Ray, Helen and Barry. Totally dependant, of course, on the motor car, they have, some months before the beginning of the novel, accidentally run down and killed a young boy riding an unlit bicycle at night. Although they telephoned for help at once, they did not leave their names and they subsequently voted not to own up to their action. Still retrospectively, we learn of the varying effects this has had on all their personalities: red-headed Julie, formerly all-American cheer-leader, has become overnight subdued, studious, and isolated; Ray, her boyfriend, has left home and school, and travelled to the coast to do odd jobs. Helen, beautiful, ambitious, who could hardly wait to put her penurious family behind her, became the Channel Five Golden Girl on the local television station; Barry, spoiled darling of a possessive mother, hero of the football field, keen to be seen with Helen only because her status gave him prestige among his friends, two-timed her and played the field with feelings for no one but himself.

The action of the novel begins with Julie's receiving an anonymous note which is the title of the book. By the time the story ends, Barry has been shot, nearly paralysed, and attempts have been made to kill Helen and Julie. The villain is a Vietnam war veteran, the cyclist's elder brother.

The story takes place on several levels. As a simple thriller, the mystery of who is responsible for the letters, the threats and the violence, is handled with skill and panache, and, as we have come to expect from Miss Duncan, with a rare gift for suspense. She makes illuminating use of the contrasts between the relationships of Julie and Ray on the one hand and Helen and Barry on the other. Miss Duncan also airs the moral conflict between personal re-

sponsibility and obedience to group decisions made democratically. Despite all these positive qualities, it must be said that this novel has dated badly. Set against a background of campus riots and the Vietnam War, the attitudes and the slang are now remote from the present age and may be quite meaningless to its intended readers. They are in no way intrinsic to the plot, and it would be a shame if this novel failed to find the audience that would appreciate its perception and maturity.

Lois Duncan is a quintessentially American writer. Kenneth Wood, author of *Shining Armour*, could be nothing but English. A teacher himself, he knows well the dreary Northern towns and sprawling comprehensive schools of which he writes. He has a fine ear for the laconic speech of the inarticulate teenagers who are his subjects and a sensitive understanding of the nebulous goodwill that characterizes them. In *Shining Armour* the narrator is Liz; her mother is dead, and she is farmed out with paternal aunt Miranda and Miranda's husband James, who run a down-at-heel junk shop. Placed in Oconothwaite (pronounced, with drab conviction, Uggit) Comprehensive School, Liz quickly falls in with a pleasantly anarchic group of youngsters, all, like herself, in their last year at school, and all leaving at the first opportunity with not the least aspiration to take any examinations. Under the headship of ineffectual Mr Holton, not much teaching or learning is done; until, that is, a new teacher, Rosa Freeman comes to take Religious Education. Rosa swears, wears crimson nail varnish, learns everyone's name in minutes, asks the class to call her Rosa, pours scorn on the school curriculum and discusses sex, and the uselessness of school discipline. She is adored by her pupils and dismissed out of hand by the school governors. In a surge of righteous indignation Liz and her friends barricade themselves into the school library. Things do not go as well as they might; the telephone does not connect directly with the outside world, they have nothing to make a banner with, and stress brings out unpleasant characteristics in one of their group. The sit-in collapses, as the group reveal themselves to be stronger on basic humanity than on theoretical protest.

Mr Wood has great insight and affection for his subject but he has chosen the wrong strategy for his plot. Liz is the first person narrator of the story, speaking in the past tense, and always from the standpoint of what is eventually the end. The inconsistency between her initial hostility to people whom she subsequently comes to understand is more a source of perplexity than illumination, and somehow the action never quite gets off the ground. It is a very difficult feat to portray tedious without being boring and in *Shining Armour* Mr Wood has, unfortunately, not quite succeeded.

*Johnny's Dragon* by Irina Korschnova. Translated by Anthea Bell. Illustrated by Mary Rahn. (Hippo. 70p. 0 590 70088 X). 1978. Johnny has problems at school because he is fat and cannot read but when a little dragon comes with him in his satchel things look up. The little dragon returns to dragonland leaving a hapless Johnny to make new friends. 5 to 7.

*The Tail of the Trinsaur* by Charles Causley. Illustrated by Jill Gardner. (Beaver. 95p. 0 600 38738 0). 1973. A variously rhyming saga of the spe-

## Cotton pickin' blues

By Holly Eley

MILDRED D. TAYLOR

Let the Circle Be Unbroken

Gollancz. £6.50.

0 575 03084 4

Works of fiction with titles taken from blues or from popular song such as *A Good Man is Hard to Find* or *You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down* are often about hardship and intense relationships occurring below the Mason-Dixon Line. Let the Circle Be Unbroken is one of these, though it is written for children and large helpings of Black American history and race relations are hidden under the oiled sausage, grits and collard greens. By focusing on a rural community (during one year of the Depression) in which both black and white sharecroppers are equally, though separately, persecuted by landlords and government and by filtering the urge to instruct through accessible, descriptive prose Mildred D. Taylor achieves in fewer pages what Alex Haley attempted in *Roots*.

The first episode, an account of the trial and unfair condemnation of a black youth, seen through the eyes of eleven-year-old tomboy Cassie Logan, is obviously, and unfavourably, comparable to *To Kill a Mock-*

## Paperbacks in brief

*Bear Hunt* by Anthony Browne. (Hippo. 95p. 0 590 70090 1). First published 1979. A bear with a magic pen goes for a walk. He is pursued by two hunters but is able to escape by drawing a series of traps and escape routes. He finally flies away on the back of a white bird "... and the hunters were left far behind." Ages 5 and under.

*The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert N. Munsch. Illustrated by Michael Martchenko. (Hippo. 85p. 0 590 71126 1). 1980. The resourceful princess Elizabeth, left without a fiancé and with nothing but a paper bag to wear, chases the dragon responsible by following a trail of burnt bones. Having rescued Prince Ronald by means of a clever trick, she finds he does not come up to scratch and so they do not get married after all. 5 and under.

*Johnny's Dragon* by Irina Korschnova. Translated by Anthea Bell. Illustrated by Mary Rahn. (Hippo. 70p. 0 590 70088 X). 1978. Johnny has problems at school because he is fat and cannot read but when a little dragon comes with him in his satchel things look up. The little dragon returns to dragonland leaving a hapless Johnny to make new friends. 5 to 7.

*The Tail of the Trinsaur* by Charles Causley. Illustrated by Jill Gardner. (Beaver. 95p. 0 600 38738 0). 1973. A variously rhyming saga of the spe-

cial delivery of a live trinsaur to the mayor of Dunborough, the general panic, the calling in of the experts, the sacrifice of Esmeralda Flight and the arrival of the army. 5 to 7.

*The Trumpeter of Krakow* by Agnes Szudek. (Granada. 85p. 0 583 30541 5). First publication. A collection of eight tales from Poland, which forms the basis of the *Jackanory* series. 5 to 7.

*The Eggbox Brontosaurus* by Michael Denton. Illustrated by Hilda Offen. (Granada. 85p. 0 583 30476 1). Crown Prince Rudi goes off on a quest to make an eggbox brontosaurus, unaware that his aunt Queen Tyrion is plotting to kill him. Luckily Amalie, the queen's handmaid, overhears the plot and by disguising herself as a page is able to keep the prince out of trouble. Meeting Rudi's fairy godmother solves the eggbox problem. 5 to 7.

*More Stories for Seven-Year-Olds* by Sara and Stephen Corrin. Illustrated by Shirley Hughes. (Puffin. £1.10. 0 14 03137 8). 1978. An anthology of sixteen suitable tales which mixes familiar stories from E. Nesbit, Kipling and Joan Aiken with the retelling of folk and fairy tales. 7 to 11.

*Handy Homes for Creepy Crawlies* by Margaret Crush. Illustrated by Sally Kindberg. (Granada. 95p. 0 583 30484 2). First publication. A handbook on how to find and care for a

variety of unusual pets from caterpillars and silkworms to diving beetles and prawns. 7 to 11.

*A Book of Disasters* by Jane Ferguson. (Hippo. 0 590 70032). First publication. Brief and factual accounts with photographs of sixteen notable modern calamities: train and plane crashes, fires, earthquakes and avalanches. 7 to 11.

*The Gift* by Peter Dickinson. Illustrated by Gareth Floyd. (Puffin. £1.0 14 030731 1). 1973. A fast-moving story about a boy with the gift for seeing into other peoples' minds which involves plans to commit a robbery and a showdown in the Welsh mountains. 11 and over.

*The Stars are Upside Down* by Gabriël Allington. (Fontana. £1.0 00 671965 1). First publication. Octavia leaves her job as a kitchenmaid in a Cadogan Square household and spends all her savings on the passage to Australia in the early years of the century. After a dramatic beginning and many trials of character she settles down to a new life. 11 and over.

*Sumitra's Story* by Rukhsana Smith. (Bodley Head. £3.50. 0 370 30466 7). First publication. The story of a young Asian girl growing up in modern Britain. Sumitra encounters hardship and prejudice and has to cope with conflicts between her parents' ways and those of her friends at school and work. 11 and over.

## PICTURE BOOKS

A VISIT TO WILLIAM BLAKE'S INN

Nancy Willard  
This superb and delightful book of magical poems about life in an imaginary inn, inspired by William Blake, and filled by elegant, simple and a rabbit, has won the 1982 Newbery Medal and has been named as a 1982 Caldecott Honour Book - the first time that both prizes have been awarded simultaneously. £5.50

HOW ONE FOOT, NOW TWO OTHERS

Tomie de Fozza  
In this moving and perceptive story, Bobby, remembering how his grandfather taught him as a child, now takes on the role of teacher as he helps his grandfather recover from the stroke. £3.95

## FIXED PAPER BOOKS

A series of lively and imaginative books for children about night in eleven.

GROWING UP IN WOOD STREET

Michael Esther Allen  
Illustrated by Lesley Smith  
The Wood Street Gang are growing up and will soon go their separate ways, but action and adventure are still to be had for them as a first break-out at the old Victorian pub where Mary Ellen lives. £2.95

## ROAD TO VICTORY

Michael Hardcastle  
Illustrated by Patricia Aitken  
A fast-moving, action-packed story full of the thrills of motor-cycle racing, continually growing in popularity. £2.95

THE ANIMALS HOOBY WANTED

Elizabeth Newland  
Illustrated by Joanna Curry  
Rescuing an abandoned gazelle, and lighting to save a valuable zoo of wild creatures housed in an old stone fort near the sea, was not how Ben and Paul had expected to spend their holiday. ... Guaranteed to appeal to all animal lovers. £3.95

THE CASE OF THE BARK HOLD-UP

Wolfgang Eicke  
Illustrated by Rolf Retlich  
Another chance to be a detective in this, the fourth title in the popular *Be a Super Sleuth* series. Solve the mystery from the clues given - but avoid the red herrings. Solutions can be found at the end of the book, with each story rated according to difficulty. £2.95

DOUBLE DARE AND OTHER STORIES

Joan Aiken  
Illustrated by Simon Willby  
A host of the supernatural provides the experiences of the children, each from a different background, featured in this sensational collection of stories. Set in present-day city life, with spellbinding glimpses into other worlds. £2.95

## HOW GREEN YOU ARE

Berlie Doherty  
Illustrated by Elaine McGregor Turney  
So vivid that you might expect to meet the characters round your own street corner, this book tells the story of five birds - and very individual - who live in the same street. Each story is a chapter in itself, and will be featured on a documentary on public life. £2.95

THE MOON ON THE WATER

Hans Werner Holzer  
Illustrated by David Perkins  
This enchanting fantasy tells of six beautiful wooden crooked houses who come to life after being abandoned in favour of a modern roundabout. Follow the moon on the water - the only one they have to lead them to the place where wild horses live. £2.95

THE SUMMER AIRFIELD

Alison Prince  
Illustrated by Edward Mortimer  
Is the old airfield haunted by wartime ghosts? In an attempt to expose a sinister plot, Ben and Horrie take on three ruthless criminals. £2.95

## OLDER FICTION

THE SOLENT ONE

Ivy Cowley  
Illustrated by Sherryl Jordan  
A poignant and beautifully written tale set in the South Pacific, in which a lonely twelve-year-old, Jonny, identifies with a solitary white tern. This magical tale also contains elements of danger and intrigue. £4.95

THIS TIME OF DARKNESS

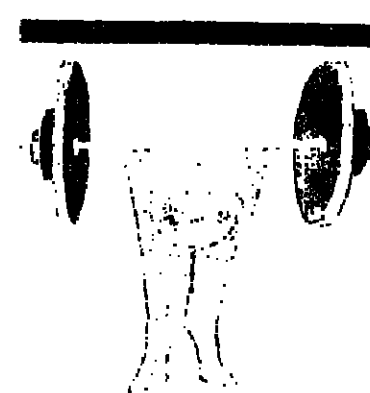
H.M. Hoover  
Powerful and frightening, but with a satisfying ending, this book tells of the escape of Amy and Ariel from the underground City. From the casually-watched labyrinth of corridors they venture into the desolate Outside, inhabited by Creeps. £4.95

methuen  
CHILDREN'S BOOKS









## John Burningham

**AVOCADO BABY**  
Twice winner of the Kate Greenaway Medal, John Burningham gives us one of his funniest books for children – about a new baby in a family of weaklings who grows so strong on a diet of avocados that we see him towing the family car, ducking the local bullies in a pond and dispatching a burglar. In full colour. 0 224 02004 8 £3.95

## Roald Dahl's

**REVOLTING RHYMES**  
A new and hilarious light on our nursery heroes and heroines – what Goldilocks, Snow White, Red Riding Hood, Cinderella and Branstalk Jack actually get up to in the modern world. Sublimely illustrated in colour by Quentin Blake. 0 224 02932 0 £3.95 (June 10)

## William Mayne

**ALL THE KING'S MEN**  
Three new stories by a master craftsman, conveying unforgettably a mood or a mystery that lies in the Celtic landscape, in a mythical European Court, and in a child's imagination. 0 224 02026 9 £5.95 (June 10)

## Arthur Ransome

**SWALLOWS AND AMAZONS**  
and  
**SWALLOWDALE**  
Reissues of the first two books in the ever-popular series, complete with endpaper maps. Fully trimmed edges. 0 224 60631 X and 0 224 60632 X £5.95 each (April 15)

## Sylvia Sherry

**STREET OF THE SMALL NIGHTMARKET**  
A release of her first and one of her most popular books, set in Singapore's Chinatown. 0 224 61062 7 £4.95

## Jonathan Cape

## On the right wavelength

By Kieki Moxon Browne

In books for the very young, ideally every part of the story should be seen in the pictures, so that the child himself can "read" the story. This is the case with *Benny Bakes a Cake*, in which a little boy helps his mother make a cake for his birthday. They are watched intently by the dog, who pounces on the cake just as it is iced – but all ends happily when another cake is produced. Eve Rice's funny little bumpy people have a style of their own, and the element of suspense is well conveyed. Also for the very young are *I'm the King of the Castle* and *I can do it!* There are already several excellent books in this series about a small bear grunting with the world around him, learning to eat or dress by himself and doing it all wrong. In the two most recent books, the bear digs in the sand with great vim and concentration, and struggles with various wheeled vehicles: "I can roller-skate" (crash) "Well, nearly." The text consists of one short sentence for each picture. Only direct speech is used, and this gives the books a light touch, involving the reader more readily.

Direct speech is also used successfully in *Ernest and Celestine* and *Bravo, Ernest and Celestine!* These are tender little stories about the friendship and mutual support of a bear and a mouse (a father and daughter, or perhaps a grandfather and granddaughter?) The gentle water colours by a new Belgian author and illustrator, Gabrielle Vincent, are reminiscent of both Beatrix Potter and E. H. Shepherd. I found the stories gripping and attractive, but something in *Ernest and Celestine* struck a wrong note. Celestine loses her baby doll (in the shape of a bird) in the snow and is heart-broken. Ernest stays up all night sewing together a new one, and Celestine is happy again. Could a favourite toy be replaced in this way any more easily than a favourite person?

The direct speech that can bring a story alive is almost completely missing in *Jenny's Baby Brother*. It starts off:

"Jenny had a baby brother and she didn't like him much", and goes on to describe the baby, lolling about covered in gooey food and blowing bubbles of spit from inside his pink, frilly cradle. Most books about new babies make guarded hints about how annoying they can be and we probably do need something more abrasive for a change. But I found this book's impersonal tone lacking in warmth, and therefore rather boring.

*Myrtle Turtle* tells the strange story of the female turtle, who instinctively swims a huge distance to lay her eggs, and then returns with her young. Dressing up the facts to involve the reader may be justified, but do the mother and father turtle have to behave so relentlessly like a suburban couple? However, the story is well told, although consciously whimsical – there is much talk of taking the dogfish for a walk, and reading Dick Whittington and his Catfish and such like. The illustrations of the underwater world are very lurid indeed.

James Marshall could hardly be accused of a deliberate effort to appeal, with his extraordinary squat creatures, tiny eyes set close together. But his stories about the two hippopotamuses George and Martha are very likeable, because the author is instinctively on the same wavelength as children. *George and Martha Rise and Shine* consists of five very short sketches in which the characters come to life beautifully, in a minimum of well chosen words: Martha is bossy, impetuous and inventive, George is boastful, gentle and a little lazy.

We also see James Marshall at work as an illustrator in *Three By the Sea*, a new title in the Bodley Beginners series. It is three short stories within one – three children at a picnic each tell a story involving a cat and a rat. One of the stories is a nice little satire of a traditional reading book: "The rat saw the cat and the dog. 'I see them' said the rat. 'I see the cat and the dog.' The stilted tone is underlined by some hilarious drawings of the animals posing stiffly and pointing awkwardly at one another. Another new title in the same series, *Leo and Emily*, is longer and more difficult to read. The story is

supplemented by speech bubbles, which is a useful device for including more words without cluttering up the text. The book which is divided into several linked but separate sections, is amusing, even bizarre, and it is obvious that the authors had great fun putting it together.

There is a similar sense of infectious enthusiasm in *Lizard's Song*. A lizard makes up a wretched little song ("zoli zoli, rock is my home"). Along comes a rather dense bear who likes the song and tries to learn it. It takes considerable effort, and he keeps on forgetting it. Eventually he changes the words to "den is my home", the song becomes his song and he can remember the words. The illustrations by Jose Aruego and Ariane Dewey are wildly funny: the text by George Shannon is deliberately low key. George Shannon is also the author of *The Piney Woods Peddler*, a traditional tale, told with suitable grandiloquence and plenty of catchwords and repetition. The co-operation between author and artist Nancy Tafuri is close. The stylized and elaborately decorated drawings are well matched by the equally stylized and slightly fussy text, set in frames and forming part of the overall design.

Books of verse for children appear all the time, but often there are too many poems, or too few illustrations,

EVE RICE: *Benny Bakes a Cake*. The Bodley Head. £3.95. 0 370 30921 9

SHIGEO WATANABE: *I'm the King of the Castle*. Illustrated by Yasuo Ohmoto. The Bodley Head. £3.25. 0 370 30912 X

SHIGEO WATANABE: *I can do it!* Illustrated by Yasuo Ohmoto. The Bodley Head. £3.25. 0 370 30911 1

GABRIELLE VINCENT: *Ernest and Celestine*. Julia MacRae Books. £2.75. 0 86203 072 2

GABRIELLE VINCENT: *Bravo, Ernest and Celestine!* Julia MacRae Books. £2.75. 0 86203 074 9

PETER SMITH: *Jenny's Baby Brother*. Illustrated by Bob Graham. Collins. £3.50. 0 00 184345 1

SHEILA LAYLLE: *Myrtle Turtle*. Illustrated by Anni Axworthy, Adam and Charles Black. £2.95. 0 7136 2093 5

or some of the poems are indifferent. It is a nice surprise to find in *Tiny Tim* that there are just the right number of poems to read through in one sitting, that every poem has strong rhythm and good words, and that each is accompanied by at least one, often several, comic and subtle illustrations by Helen Oxenbury. Most of the poems have been around for quite some years, and many of them are of unknown origin. Adults may be rather alarmed by the amount of violence contained in them: a bear cuts a little boy, a hunter accidentally shoots himself dead. They may have nightmares about a man with an exploding head ("the eyes went pop and the currants went bang") but my own excessively squeamish and easily upset children did not find anything remotely disturbing about these poems. Presumably adults associate the violence with real life whereas for most children the characters are remote from reality, further distanced by the rhythmic verse. An adult friend could hardly bring herself to pronounce (about the drowning brother) "he died last night with a bubble in his throat", but could finally chant with some satisfaction:

Dead said the doctor.  
Dead said the nurse.  
Dead said the lady with the alligator purse.

JAMES MARSHALL: *George and Martha Rise and Shine*. Kestrel Books. £4.50. 0 7226 5734 X

EDWARD MARSHALL: *Three by the Sea*. Illustrated by James Marshall. The Bodley Head. £3.25. 0 370 30455 1

FRANZ BRANDENBERG: *Leo and Emily*. Illustrated by Aiki. The Bodley Head. £3.25. 0 370 30913 4

GEORGE SHANNON: *Lizard's Song*. Illustrated by Jose Aruego and Ariane Dewey. Julia MacRae Books. £4.95. 0 86203 057 9

GEORGE SHANNON: *The Piney Woods Peddler*. Illustrated by Nancy Tafuri. Julia MacRae Books. £4.95. 0 86203 061 7

JILL BENNETT (Editor): *Tiny Tim*. Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. Heinemann. £3.95. 0 434 95601 5

illustrated by Margaret Tempest. She is to Utley what Shepard was to Milne, Soper to Blyton and Potter to Potter. Originally the books were more colourful, more shiny. The watercolour drawings had a quality charm: home-made without being entirely artless. Now, flattened and washed-out, on matt paper, the images aren't what they were. The gloss has gone, so has the quick lustre. Grey Rabbit has lost her sheen. Despite these changes the essential charm remains, for Alison Utley's characters are robust. She knew her species. Grey Rabbit is more complex than she at first appears, not a stuffed bunny but Teacher, Mother and Big Sister rolled into one; a great comforter. Living together in their dell, Hare, Squirrel and Little Grey Rabbit are an endearing ménage à trois.

Printed fifteen versions of a well-known fairy-tale, with scholarly apparatus and introduction, sounds as if it ought to be a good idea, but unfortunately, in this case it turns out not to be. Possibly the trouble is that "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" is too late and too literary. The earliest version recorded is 1837, though Warren Ober, the editor of the volume, shows that Robert Southey's version of 1837 can be taken back to twenty years or so earlier. Southey's "Story of the Three Bears" got a stranglehold on the tale's development much too soon, however. Version number 5 of those printed here is his, verbatim, with new illustrations, number 12 (Andrew Lang's) shows only trifling changes, number 4 substitutes a little girl for Southey's "one" – one of the versions here is by Tolstoy, given with a touch of parody in Russian. After a while even great, rough, gruff voices and little, small, wee bears begin to pail.

Furthermore what the "evolution" of this tale shows most strongly is the awful archness with which children were treated all through the nineteenth century. Southey started it, by using an old woman instead of the later "Silverhairs" or "Goldlocks", and by treating her for going into houses without knocking, eating other people's porridge, breaking chairs and saying "wicked" words

## Matters of rhythm and register

By Josephine Karavasili

Commendations are more difficult to write than condemnations but critical evasion is not my reason for starting with the very worst of this group of picture books for five to seven year olds. *Thiseltdown* by M. M. Kaye of *Far Pavilions* fame. Belatedly trying to cash in on the nostalgia fashion with its handwritten text and borders of fairies and elves, this piece of sheer self-indulgence comes at a time when the technique of colour printing should have been put to better effect at a lower price. The story is highly moralistic in the late Edwardian tradition and tells how Thiseltdown's vanity is punished by "Queen Mab herself", who turns the forward fairy into a power puff – a dandelion puff according to the picture though with a name like Thiseltdown it's difficult to understand why. This was a real disappointment from a house like Quartet which ought to have been brave and untrammelled enough to break away from the stifling orthodoxies of the children's trade.

Successfully outside the mainstream, with its well-conceived laid-out and narrative verse form, is *Miss Wirtles' Revenge*. It large format was probably dictated by Graham Clarke's original etching, figured on the last two pages of the book and used as a context for the granny to tell her story of a courageous little heroine. The dark brown script, while adding to the book's beauty, is very readable, the letters well formed and clear, and the story itself swings along at a remarkable pace.

Changes of rhythm in the verse are often useful for dramatic impact though occasionally the meaning of a word is stretched just to get the rhythm right. This is indeed a granny's tale with something to offer. A girl is ranged against a whole class of boys and wins throughout, but the final position is that of the people: "Battles are fun, and have to be won. / But nobody wins the war".

A visit to *William Blake's Inn* is a collection of verse remarkable for the beauty of the Provencals' illustrations, for its fine production on tinted, speckled paper and for the impulse which gave rise to it – Nancy Willard's love of Blake's poetry. The magical subjects of the verses will undoubtedly awaken a wide range of responses and language. The simple moral point of "Blake leads a walk on the Milky Way" comes closest to Blake but elsewhere elements like the King of the Cats and his "heavenly nine-mouse stew" border on whimsy. The book will be either loathed or loved.

## Doing the bears

By Tom Shippey

WARREN U. OBER (Editor):

*The Story of the Three Bears*  
The Evolution of an International Classic

Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints.  
New York: Delmar  
0 8201 1362 X

One finds oneself looking for awful versions just by way of change, and these are certainly present. Henry Dulcken's rendering of 1858 is outstanding in its conversion of the Three Bears to a family of Podnaps, big bear dull, overbearing and belligerent, little sister vain and bullied, with a nice sister in between. However the anonymous Routledge version of 1867 outdoes it by its dotty urge to apologize for Silverlocks without seeming to condone immorality: she is a "sad romp", a "saucy puss", a "restless girl", a "little busybody", with hugs and smacks most horribly interwoven. Mr Ober wades through all this manfully, with changes, number 4 substitutes a little girl for Southey's "one" – one of the versions here is by Tolstoy, given with a touch of parody in Russian. After a while even great, rough, gruff voices and little, small, wee bears begin to pail.

Furthermore what the "evolution" of this tale shows most strongly is the awful archness with which children were treated all through the nineteenth century. Southey started it, by using an old woman instead of the later "Silverhairs" or "Goldlocks", and by treating her for going into houses without knocking, eating other people's porridge, breaking chairs and saying "wicked" words

passioned. The princess in *The Nose Tree* looks so aggressively teenage and rebellious that her come-uppance for stealing a magic cloak, purse and horn from three soldiers seems thoroughly well deserved. Her nose grows so long that it stretches right out the window and far down into the garden, and only returns to normal when she confesses.

Among the cosier and realistic books of this batch, *My Dad Doesn't Even Notice* stands out for the simplicity of its idea, the comforting repetition of the title-phrase and the action and wit of the pictures. A unique touch to the story, which will not escape adults though it may escape children, is that however apparently oblivious or harassed Dad is, he does sometimes notice – his beady eye certainly suggests that he himself is piloting one of the planes in the aerial attack. Svend Otto's landscapes and seascapes are perhaps the strongest point in *The Giant Fish*. The story about waiting for a chance to catch "the big one" is fairly commonplace though the succession of scenes when Peter is landing the thrashing halibut in the boat are dramatic. The episodic story of *Teddy Trucks*, in which TT4 Gerry gets into predictable scrapes, is even less compelling despite the fascination a delivery truck driver's day might hold. Once you've said of Michele Carli's artwork that "it's full of detail, children love", there isn't much more to say. It is doubtful whether children will play the board game on the endpapers.

The one realistic story which moves away from the market safety of white British characters is *Goldie the Dollmaker*, a little book about a girl who makes dolls out of wood and loves beautiful things even though her friends don't understand why. The idea behind the story is sound but in the hands of an Isaac Bashevis Singer the characterization could have been expected to be fuller and the setting more particularized. Nor is the absence of a firm background helped by the pictures, which lack warmth and life. *The Bag of Salt*, a Turkish folk tale, is circular in form and therefore necessarily satisfying because you want to know how on earth it will return to the beginning. The endpapers are attractive and although some of the figure drawing in the brightly coloured realistic pictures is good, the overall impression is slightly dated. A superb piece of printing from the Fat East picks up William Stobbs's subtle mauves and blues in *Rainbow Warrior*, a North American Indian version of *Cinderella*. Although there is much vigour and life in Stobbs's pictures, he gets away with some dubious shadows which may have begun life as mistakes.

The only non-fiction title in the group, *The Story of Hay*, is no sterile polemic but seems to have been written from a love for the scythes, rakes, wagons and machines, both old and new, which have been used for making hay. The book begins with an identification picture of the

group. *The Story of Hay*, is no sterile polemic but seems to have been written from a love for the scythes, rakes, wagons and machines, both old and new, which have been used for making hay. The book begins with an identification picture of the

group. *The Story of Hay*, is no sterile polemic but seems to have been written from a love for the scythes, rakes, wagons and machines, both old and new, which have been used for making hay. The book begins with an identification picture of the

## Meet Victor and Maria!

VICTOR AND MARIA

Carme Bolé Vendrell and Roc Almirall  
Victor and Maria are here – and you never know quite what's going to happen when they're around! Four funny adventures about a big bear and a small girl, soon to be seen on TV. The Coast  
The Cherry Tree The Bandstand  
The Climax APRIL £2.50hb 75p pb

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Judith Caseley  
A lush and richly detailed picture book of Adam and Eve in a marvellously transformed Garden of Eden, full of brilliantly coloured plants, fish and birds, all accurately drawn. APRIL £5.25

## Blackie and Abelard

The Best in Books for Children  
Furnival House, 14-18 High Holborn, London WC1V 6EX  
Telephone: 01-242 5832

JON'S MOON

Carme Bolé Vendrell  
Beautifully soft and delicate illustrations by an internationally acclaimed artist, in this powerful poignant story of Jon's search for his father's spirit, lost in a gale at sea. APRIL £4.95



One of Mike Dickinson's illustrations to *My Dad Doesn't Even Notice*, reviewed here.

grasses that end up as hay. Then you see how the tools and machines have been gradually changed and refined until now they do their job more quickly and efficiently. It is helpful that the functions of machines which are difficult to understand are illustrated separately. Three spreads show haymaking in the same field before, during and after the Industrial Revolution. The trim and tidy present-day field lacks charm but that's "Progress". It is a pleasure to look at this book and knowledge about the changing workload of farmers and the development of one precise kind of machinery will be absorbed naturally.

Even this book, however, is marred by imperfect registration. Whether printed in Hong Kong or Belgium, Britain or Spain, several titles in this group of books had more than one page out of register.

M. M. KAYE: *Thiseltdown*. Quartet. £4.95. 0 7043 2303 6

MICHAEL MORFUKO: *Miss Wirtles' Revenge*. Illustrated by Graham Clarke. Kaye and Ward. £5. 0 7182 3980 6

NANCY WILLARD: *A Visit to William Blake's Inn*. Illustrated by Alice and Martin Provensen. Methuen. £5.50. 0 416 22160 2

JOAN HICKSON: *The Seven Sparrows and the Motor Car Picnic*. Deutsch. £4.95. 0 233 97363 X

JEAN-CLAUDE BRISVILLE: *King Oleg*. Illustrated by Daniele Bour. Gollancz. £3.95. 0 575 03074 7

ROBERT MCCRUM: *The Magic Mouse and the Millionaire*. Illustrated by Michael Foreman. Hamish Hamilton. £4.25. 0 241 10720 2

WARREN HUTTON: *The Nose Tree*. Julia MacRae Books. £4.95. 0 86203 040 4

MIKE DICKINSON: *My Dad Doesn't Even Notice*. Deutsch. £3.50. 0 233 97358 0

SVEND OTTO S.: *The Giant Fish*. Translated by Janet Tate. Pelham. £3.50. 0 7207 1380 3

MICHELLE CARLIDGE: *Teddy Trucks*. Heinemann. £3.95. 0 434 93143 8

M. B. GOFSTEIN: *Goldie the Dollmaker*. Canongate Publishing. £2.50. 0 86241 000 2

PETER M. ALLEN: *The Bag of Salt*. Illustrated by Gabrielle Stoddart. Hodder and Stoughton. £3.95. 0 340 25293 6

MARCUS CAUVER: *Rainbow Warrior*. Illustrated by William Stobbs. Pelham. £3.95. 0 7207 1296 3

GEORGE PATTERSON: *The Story of Hay*. Deutsch. £4.50. 0 233 97356 7

SHEILA LAYLLE: *Mr Ginger's Potato*. Illustrated by Anni Axworthy. A. and C. Black. £2.95. 0 7136 2092 7



## Bob Tales and Curly Tales

### 'LITTLE GREY RABBIT'

Alison Uttley

Illustrated by Margaret Temper

'Twelve favourite tales about the famous woodland trio of Squirrel, Hare and Little Grey Rabbit are back by popular demand in the original full-colour editions 12.95 each

### 'PADDINGTON BEAR'

Michael Bond

Two new Board Books with lovely colour photographs in which PADDINGTON WORKS HARD and PADDINGTON HAS FUN. April £1.25 each

... and introducing a brand new character

### PRECISELY PIG

whose apprenticeship into country ways is delightfully recounted by Michael Berthoud and illustrated by John Lawrence.

September 14.95

Visit Collins at Bologna  
Hall G Stand 43



Collins

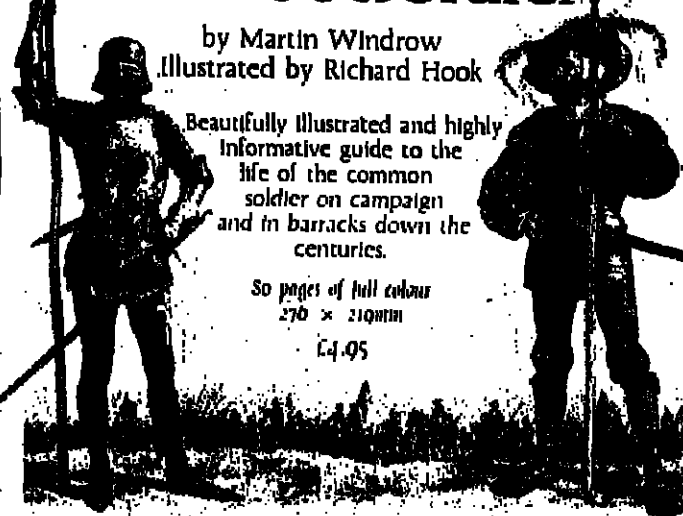
## The Footsoldier

by Martin Windrow

Illustrated by Richard Hook

Beautifully illustrated and highly informative guide to the life of the common soldier on campaign and in barracks down the centuries.

So pages of full colour  
296 x 210mm  
£4.95



Oxford Books for Children

## Children's Literature, 10

Annual of the Modern Language Association Division on Children's Literature and the Children's Literature Association

edited by Francella Butler, Samuel Pickering, Jr., and Compton Rees

Volume 10 of this lively and invaluable source for all students of children's literature will include the following articles: Robin Hood and the Invention of Children's Literature; The Story of the Story; The Willow Pattern; Plate in Children's Literature; Childlike Wonder and the Truths of Science Fiction.

Illustrated Cloth £14.00 Paper £5.25

Yale University Press

New Haven & London

13 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3JP

### Childhood Books

Catalogue 2/82 available now

Over 350 titles, incl. many annuals & illus. books

132 Macomb Rd., London SE16 2QL Tel: 01-854 1965

Postal business only

## German children's books

By Idris Parry

To get into the proper frame of mind about literature for children in Germany, we might note the remark of one of their critics that "up to the present there has been no theory of the children's book". The context tells us this is a confession of failure, not a joke. No doubt the theory will come. At this moment there must be earnest researchers after truth and a PhD toiling in the Picture-Book Archives of the Klingspor Museum at Offenbach. Only in Germany could Romanticism become a collection of theories about doing without theories. Feeding on honey-dew is not widely accepted there as a satisfying form of nourishment.

Yet of course the paradox which punctures generalization is that from Germany we get the glorious honey-dew of the Märchen. The Germans, however, have come a long way from the intuitive simplicity of that oral tradition. Their attempts at Märchen for the modern child are laboured. With some notable exceptions, they have an overwhelming wish to organize, improve and instruct.

Since Campe's pedagogical adaptation of *Robinson Crusoe* in 1780, literature for German children has drawn heavily on foreign sources. Of this season's offerings, one of the most imaginative is *Der Wunderhund*, a translation of the collected stories for children by Richard Hughes. These stories are completely in the tradition of the folk-tale. Suspense is combined with the rebellious absurdity of magic. The settings are modern but eternal; the general atmosphere is a Garden of Eden with telephones as well as temptation, and the snake a thoroughly sympathetic character. What a good author was lost to children when Hughes turned to writing novels for grown-ups. A lovely book to look at and feel, with pictures by Anne Wildorf, a credit to the Diogenes Press.

Hughes does not fall into the trap of thinking you can entertain children simply by letting animals speak. Talking animals can be as dull as

talking people (and all children know how dull they can be). Another Diogenes book, *Wie der Maulwurf beinahe in der Lotterie gewann* by Kurt Bracharz, is a moral tale about how Mole is deluded into thinking he has won a fortune in a lottery. The animals speak but say no more than greedy people in the same situation. This is a clever story which cannot be read twice, but the book can be looked at again and again for the fine drawings by Tatjana Hauptmann, now one of the leading figures in the production of children's books in Germany. Her muted colours and bulging animals are popular in England too.

So many translations come from German publishers that one can get a good idea of the whole span of world literature for children by looking at their lists. This season the English contribution continues with *Paddington: der kleine Bär feiert Geburtstag und Pollyfoot die Pferd-farm*, among many others. America has been a quarry since Fenimore Cooper. Tomi Ungerer, Edward Gorey and Maurice Sendak are at the top for German children. The re-issue in one slip-case of Ungerer's five books, *Die Fabelhafte Fabeltiere*, including the story of that imperishable snake Crictor, shows what an advantage it can be when author and illustrator are one. Shapes of words melt into shapes of drawings. They speak in unison like earliest voice, which was gesture as well as sound. But it is now twenty years since these modern classics appeared in America.

Back among the natives, Helme Heine continues his series of splendid books for younger children with *Freunde*. He too is both writer and illustrator. This does undoubtedly add an extra dimension of pleasure to his timeless story about the adventures of three farmyard friends (cockerel, pig and mouse), a warm tale with sweeping imaginative pictures which must do something for the latent extravagance of childish thought. Heine has achieved astonishing success in a very short time, all his books being published in Britain as well as many other countries. His work is a familiar ingredient of children's television in Germany, and the Middelhaue Press claim he is

their most successful author since Leo Leonni.

In Austria, the press run by Paul Mangold is busy issuing children's books illustrated by Paul Mangold, very striking books too, in bright colours and typographical arrangements well designed to please. *Joki und seine Freunde* is about a scarecrow transformed by human friendship into a friend of birds. It just shows what children can do by being kind. *Spuren im Schnee* and *Neue Spuren im Schnee* take children out into the snow to learn about tracks left by different animals: "A picture book for children from the age of three who want to learn to read the Great Book of Nature." Do Austrian children really have that much virtue and volition? Here, as in most things, performance is more important than intention, and the performance of this painter-publisher is so technically and imaginatively brilliant that it quite overcomes the severity of his educational intent.

Older children are even fairer game for instruction. Adult preoccupations are reflected in such books as *Wohner-Wohnst*, *Schiller in Süd-Afrika* and *der Suche nach ihrer Identität*, a collection of facts and photos and interviews about apartheid. Another sign of the times is *Der Junge, der seinen Geburtstag vergass*, described by the publishers Ravensburger as "the first pacifist novel for juveniles" (their exclamation mark). From here we move to the multitude of useful books on hobbies and how the world works which are common to all collections of children's books and are approvingly bought by parents. Just as the clothes of the young have become international, so it is hard to distinguish a characteristically German teenage taste for books. Kipling and Tolkien figure in their lists, and what are we to make of such a German phenomenon among the *Erzählende Kinderbücher* as *Schatzmännchen und Binde's Aht Mischelbahn: Geschichten und Bilder aus dem Leben des legendären Jazzpianisten Fats Waller*. Legends are still sought and found in unlikely places. It may not be a bad thing to wear the same books as well as the same clothes and music, as long as these books are the best of individual treasures.

## The flavour of folklore

By Russell Davies

ITALO CALVINO (Editor):

L'Uccel Belverde

Giulio Einaudi editore, L.800.

The fairy-stories of another people are always interesting, and any collection of fiction that passes through the editorship of Italo Calvino will seize its opportunity to point out some of the universal mysteries of story-telling. It follows that *L'Uccel Belverde*, even if it does not convert anyone to the particular flavours of Italian folklore, is bound to send the reader back to "The Three Bears" and "The Three Little Pigs" with a new respect, not to mention a revived awareness, normally suppressed by familiarity, that many of our so-called English folk-tales are imports. But there is no knowing where some of this material originated. The warnings implicit in it against the possibility of favouritism within the family after remarriage; against the likelihood that two sisters will make life hell for a third; against the assumption that ugliness is necessarily and permanently abhorrent are universal, and it is perhaps comforting to realize that when all else fails, nations as different as England and Italy will still be proceeding on much the same undercurrent of superstition.

The present volume is a selection, made for the standard nursery purposes, from Calvino's "monumental" *Volume of Flabie italiane* (1950/1). It is laid out in sections by genre, with the simplest first (*Flabie per i più piccoli*) and then a gentle progression towards emotional, social and

grammatical complexity. This gradual shelving in the direction of fully resourced Italian could incidentally be of use to beginners in the language, for whom the repetitions natural to the technique of children's stories might be useful as well as reassuring.

It is apparent that in Italy few concessions are made to *la più piccola* when it comes to admitting the world's injustices. *I due gatti* - "The Two Hunchbacks" - carries honesty on this point to the borders of absurdity, or even to the stage-door of the Theatre of Cruelty. One hunchbacked brother, taking refuge up a tree, finds that his perch is used as a maypole by a team of strange old women, all dancing round and chanting: "Sabato e Domenica! Sabato e Domenica!" as they go. In spite of the strong suggestion that *Sabato* in this case has a whiff of the Witches' Sabbath about it, the hunchback is unable to resist leaning down from his eyrie and adding, at the appropriate rhythmic moment, the words "E Lunedì!" The crones are delighted with this innovation and, being indeed witches, reward the inventor with the removal of his disfigurement. Returning home, he naturally infects his still-afflicted brother with enthusiasm for the story, which duly repeats itself, up to the point where the second brother leans down from the tree and adds "E Martedì!" to the already augmented chant. But this addition entirely ruins the danceable character of the refrain; and on descending from the tree, the luckless brother, far from earning a reward, has his brother's discarded hump wished onto him by the enraged old sorceresses.

An indication of the geographical origin of each story is given at the end, and this little parable in praise of originality is credited to Florence. It is tempting to read all kinds of local significances into its emphasis, and it is hardly to be denied that the Florentines to this day remain spectacularly devoted to the idea that they got it. But this tale probably has many regional variants. Matters of regional interpretation become much clearer in later stories where the rivalries - dating back to the age of the warring city-states - are made explicit. *Il Fiorentino* gets his appearance in the story of the same name, ascribed by Calvino to a Pisan source. The Florentine escapes with his life, but minus one finger which he has had to cut off in order to rid himself of a magic ring that was threatening to turn him to marble. His story on returning home to Florence is that he lost the digit mowing grass. The Pisan points out the lengths a Florentine will go to in order to maintain the fiction of his savoir-faire.

Variants on "Beauty and the Beast" and "The Three Little Pigs" (here a family of geese who do a deal with a blacksmith, in the style of "The Little Red Hen", in order to have constructed a little wolf-proof house of iron), these speak for themselves. The reader who begins to lose patience can always amuse himself by looking out for those little inventions Calvino admits to having permitted himself here and there. I should be surprised if the beginning of the last story, *La Barba del Conte*, did not involve one of these. Peccapaglia, a town so steeply built upon a rocky outcrop that little geese have to be tied under, then hens' tails to prevent the eggs rolling off into the woods below - this sounds to me very much like one of Calvino's "Invisible Cities".

## French children's books

By Anne Corbett

Part of the received wisdom of those who campaign in France for better children's books is that too many contemporary French authors are teachers. In a lecture given a year ago, Geneviève Patte, founder of the information and training centre for children's librarians, "La Joie par les Livres", attacked the faults of the "pédagogues". They insist on a thesis, she complained and tailor language and situation to fit an overriding idea. The result is a filtered world in which children are not seen in the round: no doubt because teachers are so ill at ease with them. When, she asked, would French authors produce books rooted in genuine experience?

It is a question which has been waiting for an answer for the past fifteen years or so. There have been astonishing changes, and healthy profits, in French children's publishing in the interim. The big publishers have followed in the pioneer footsteps of Jean Fabre at the Ecole des Loisirs and Isabelle Jan at Nathan. Gallimard has launched several complementary series in the wake of its successful Folio Junior paperback reprints: Folio Benjamin for young readers, science fiction, thrillers, poetry and most recently a bilingual series. They bear the Gallimard hallmark of excellent illustration and well designed typeface.

Hachette, living with the anxieties of a takeover, has a good paperback series, and has recently added to its hardcover books a series for younger readers (Gobelune). Le Père Castor, now part of Flammarion, has been celebrating its fiftieth anniversary with a new paperback series of previously unpublished stories for the eight to twelve age range (Castor Poche). Albin Michel, well known for its adult fiction list, has now entered the children's market. And though some small publishers disappear, at least two much praised ones have entered the lists in the last couple of years: Le Sorcier run by one of the key figures from La Farandole, and Editions de la Buissonnière, which gets a helping hand from Gallimard.

One feature has not changed. The majority of books are translations. This is not just a matter of the economics of producing the glossy illustrated books (though this was presumably a factor with two of Albin Michel's successes: *Les Gnomes* by W. Huygen and R. Poortvliet and Graham Oakley's *512*). It has also been a matter of producing texts which break away from authoritarian or didactic stereotypes. The robustness, imagination and sensitivity, clearly appreciated by children and critics, are seen as foreign prerogatives. Three-quarters of the new Père Castor series are translations. Isabelle Jan at Nathan, continuing in her

search for the original and challenging, has just brought out Leon Garfield, Penelope Lively and Nina Bayden (Ave en Poche 2), Italian, Latin American, Polish and Japanese authors are relatively easy to find. A paperback originals series from Bordas of consistent quality (Aux Quatre Coins du Temps) contains an attractive story from film maker and writer Satyajit Ray, which had not hitherto been translated from the original Bengali.

Nevertheless there are signs that French authors are moving onto the scene. Gallimard for example has two much publicized authors (on the Folio Junior list) whose books are advertised for the difficult thirteen and over age group. The books undoubtedly fulfil one of Geneviève Patte's criteria: they are rooted in personal experience. I myself think there is some ambiguity in both these in relationship of the author to the reader. Jean-Francis Malineau, in *La Tue-Mouche*, invites us to relive his first affair. It is remembered in a glow of sunsets on mountain tops and the picking of forbidden flowers. It seemed to me so redolent of memory tempered by experience that it would be better suited to older and more critical readers: after the first affair, rather than before.

L'Algérie ou La Mort des Autres

## Books without tears

By Cara Chanteau

For those feeling jaded with *la plume de ma tante* and Mr Cooper's *Grammar*, or who fancy a plunge into hair-raising surrealism, gallic humour and pithy philosophy, there is an excellent exhibition of French children's books which has been travelling round Britain since last October. Organized by the National Book League in conjunction with l'Office de Promotion de l'Édition Française and the cultural department of the French Embassy in Great Britain, the exhibition contains some four hundred books from France, specializing in those published over the last five years.

The picture-book section, as the least taxing linguistically, would probably be the most profitable for the elementary teaching of French. Besides the familiar translations such as Ardizzone's *Tin* series, and *What Do You Say, Dear* illustrated by Sendak, the section consists for the most part of undemanding and appealing home-grown stories. Animals in general feature quite a lot. Magic creatures assist diminutive protagonists, Edgar Allan Poe's cat makes its appearance in pop art, and assorted animals show thoroughly anthropomorphic abilities to learn the basic lessons of life. *Grepolame* (Nathan,

by Virginie Buisson) is very different. The simple sentences and short, spaced-out paragraphs take us at staccato rhythm from the excitement of an adolescent girl brought up in Lorraine, at finding herself in an apparently exotic Algeria, to the growing tension preceding the war of independence, and finally the daily horror of death. It cries out for the epilogue: where does Virginie Buisson stand now? But the talent is so evident that it is good news that she is at work on another book.

Then there is Honesty Dumas. No problems of philosophy here. He is a writer at ease with himself and his readers. Dumas has been around for some time, and his Ardizzone-like illustrations are a feature of a number of Ecole des Loisirs books. Now comes *Le Changement*. Dumas's father died recently, an old man, after a long illness. Dumas responds to the unasked question of his children and their young cousins about death and whether or not there is a hereafter. He tells them in words and drawings the story of their grandfather's life from the day that he was born. The book encompasses quite remarkably past and present, the children he is talking to and drawing for, and the grandfather they only knew partially. Affectionate and sensitive, it is a book which inspires respect.

There are a number of other French authors most of whose books I personally find a pleasure to buy for children: my own or others'. Yves Pommeau, Anne Marie Chapouton, Rémi Laureillard, François Sautereau, François Clément and Guy Jimeses have all produced readable stories in the past year or so for younger children. Pierre Louki, who was a scriptwriter for George Branssens, has a nice mixture of fantasy and real life in *Un Papa pas Possible*. André Chedid, well known as a writer for adults has a striking story called *L'Autre*. Books by Claude Klotz are worth making a pilgrimage for. And if you are looking for illustrator-writers, Agnès Rosenstiel

logic is more fearsome than that of Lewis Carroll. For the more advanced reader, the fiction section like the picture books, has the same alchemy of ingenuity and imagination, while also providing some more serious matter. Indeed, Faure runs a series called "Les enfants peuvent lire aussi" - a nice blend of encouragement and concession. Some of these like *Aujourd'hui c'est demain*, 1980, and Gallimard's *La Rue du Puits-qui-Parle*, 1981, looked quite fascinating, although I did not manage to find *Mila marie son Père*, intriguingly titled as "une famille non-conformiste". A surprisingly racy inclusion here was *Zazie dans le meiro* (Gallimard, 1979) - Raymond Queneau's superbly irreverent reflection of Paris seen through the eyes of Zazie, a precocious and wayward child. The text is unbridged complete with all Zazie's wonderfully unsuitable acquaintances. It even has pretty illustrations; I suppose it will be made into a cartoon soon.

After two generations of Tintin, Astérix and the others influenced by the Brussels school of cartoonists, the French still excel at the cartoon book. Apart from the purely entertaining, there are whole series successfully oriented towards education: *La Découverte des Mammifères* (1979) from L'Équipe, on the conquest of space in eight volumes. Also from the same people is an attractive *Histoire de France*, 1978, in eight parts.

This treatment is applied to music, ancient history, Georges Sand's life and even to England's triumph in Casterman's two volume *L'Invincible Armada*, 1979-80. Less interesting perhaps to the average English child will be the documentary and reference books. They have their too exact counterparts in English. The songs and nursery rhymes are fun, but tend to be the sort of books to browse through.

Finally, there is a good clutch of classics: Perrault, Victor Hugo, Daudet and even Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (Delagrave, 1933-34). Gallimard have covered many of the more recent like St Exupéry's *Vol de Nuit*, 1972, *Le Petit Prince*, 1979, Fourrier's *Grand Manège*, 1976, and Pasquand's *Le Chien des Boutons*, 1972. Robinson Crusoe and Pickwick Papers can be found too, for those feeling contrary.

Des Livres Français Pour la Jeunesse will be in Tameside Teachers' Centre, Stanford St, Leicester, March 6-20; Bradford Central Library, Princes Way, Bradford, April 10-24; and Wimborne Teachers' Centre, King St, Wimborne, Dorset, May 8-20. A very good catalogue, with a useful list of English stockists has been published by l'Office de Promotion de l'Édition Française, and is available from the National Book League, Book House, 45 East Hill, London SW18.

## FUN & FANTASY FACT & FICTION

HUTCHINSON & ANDERSEN PRESS, SPRING '82



Written & Illustrated by Nadine Bernard Wescott  
**THE GIANT VEGETABLE GARDEN**  
In this delightful picture book, giant vegetables grow for a nation's dinner. In full colour £3.95

LISTEN WITH MOTHER  
Published in association with the BBC  
With a Preface by Nerys Hughes  
Illustrated by Patricia Lamont  
A delightful anthology of stories from this well-loved programme, being published for the first time in book form. Under 5s. £2.95

Margaret Wise Brown & Ann Straubell  
**ONCE UPON A TIME IN A PIGPEN**  
A picture book of rare and enchanting quality - four treatable animal tales illustrated with elegance and wit. In full colour & b/w £4.95

Ingrid & Dieter Schubert  
**THE MAGIC BUBBLE TRIP**  
In this witty and inventive new journey by the authors of 'There's a Crocodile Under My Bed', a young boy forbidden to bring home from the pond is chased up by the forces of magic. In full colour £3.95



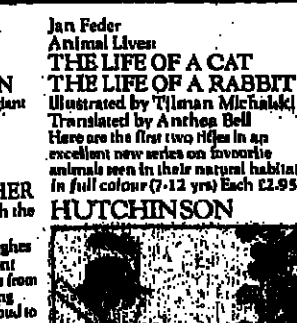
Jan Feder  
**THE LIFE OF A CAT**  
Illustrated by Tamas Mikszik  
Translated by Anthea Bell  
There are five star titles in an excellent new series on favourite animals seen in their natural habitat. In full colour £1.25 each £2.95

Colin West  
**NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY**  
Amusingly illustrated by the author, this collection of over 100 jokes for youngsters of all ages. In full colour £3.95

Torrie de Tade  
**THE HUNTER AND THE ANIMALS**  
A full-colour picture book, illustrated with enchanting scenes of the world of Hungarian folk art, the forest and the hunt. In full colour £3.95

Rev Brown  
**THE LIFE OF A CAT**  
Illustrated by Victoria Cooper  
In this fourth exciting mystery story, the cat detective Chirp and his friends solve a case. In full colour £3.95

Rev Brown  
**THE LIFE OF A CAT**  
Illustrated by Victoria Cooper  
In this fourth exciting mystery story, the cat detective Chirp and his friends solve a case. In full colour £3.95



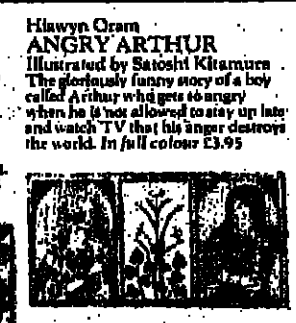
Jan Feder  
**THE LIFE OF A RABBIT**  
Illustrated by Tamas Mikszik  
Translated by Anthea Bell  
There are five star titles in an excellent new series on favourite animals seen in their natural habitat. In full colour £1.25 each £2.95

Colin West  
**NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY**  
Amusingly illustrated by the author, this collection of over 100 jokes for youngsters of all ages. In full colour £3.95

Torrie de Tade  
**THE HUNTER AND THE ANIMALS**  
A full-colour picture book, illustrated with enchanting scenes of the world of Hungarian folk art, the forest and the hunt. In full colour £3.95

Rev Brown  
**THE LIFE OF A CAT**  
Illustrated by Victoria Cooper  
In this fourth exciting mystery story, the cat detective Chirp and his friends solve a case. In full colour £3.95

Rev Brown  
**THE LIFE OF A CAT**  
Illustrated by Victoria Cooper  
In this fourth exciting mystery story, the cat detective Chirp and his friends solve a case. In full colour £3.95



Jan Feder  
**THE LIFE OF A RABBIT**  
Illustrated by Tamas Mikszik  
Translated by Anthea Bell  
There are five star titles in an excellent new series on favourite animals seen in their natural habitat. In full colour £1.25 each £2.95

Colin West  
**NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY**  
Amusingly illustrated by the author, this collection of over 100 jokes for youngsters of all ages. In full colour £3.95

Torrie de Tade  
**THE HUNTER AND THE ANIMALS**  
A full-colour picture book, illustrated with enchanting scenes of the world of Hungarian folk art, the forest and the hunt. In full colour £3.95

Rev Brown  
**THE LIFE OF A CAT**  
Illustrated by Victoria Cooper  
In this fourth exciting mystery story, the cat detective Chirp and his friends solve a case. In full colour £3.95

Rev Brown  
**THE LIFE OF A CAT**  
Illustrated by Victoria Cooper  
In this fourth exciting mystery story, the cat detective Chirp and his friends solve a case. In full colour £3.95



Jan Feder  
**THE LIFE OF A RABBIT**  
Illustrated by Tamas Mikszik  
Translated by Anthea Bell  
There are five star titles in an excellent new series on favourite animals seen in their natural habitat. In full colour £1.25 each £2.95

Colin West  
**NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY**  
Amusingly illustrated by the author, this collection of over 100 jokes for youngsters of all ages. In full colour £3.95

Torrie de Tade  
**THE HUNTER AND THE ANIMALS**  
A full-colour picture book, illustrated with enchanting scenes of the world of Hungarian folk art, the forest and the hunt. In full colour £3.95

Rev Brown  
**THE LIFE OF A CAT**  
Illustrated by Victoria Cooper  
In this fourth exciting mystery story, the cat detective Chirp and his friends solve a case. In full colour £3.95

Rev Brown  
**THE LIFE OF A CAT**  
Illustrated by Victoria Cooper  
In this fourth exciting mystery story, the cat detective Chirp and his friends solve a case. In full colour £3.95







## Plays for pupils

By Anna Scher

GEORGE MOORE:  
The Prince and the Demons  
0 423 00260 4

ADRIAN MITCHELL:  
You Must Believe All This  
0 423 00260 2

BRIAN GLOVER:  
Death Angel  
0 423 00300 3

ANDREW DAVIES:  
Marmalade Atkins  
0 423 00320 8

JAMES ANDREW HALL:  
Reasons to be Cheerful  
0 423 00270 8

Melbuen Young Drama Series.  
£1.95 each.

The second most popular question I get asked on the many drama courses I run at my Children's Theatre in Islington is what can I suggest for the School Play - the first most popular question is how to keep discipline. There seems to be a dearth of really good plays that are suitable for children and young people - there are a few dull, bookish

plays but no one wants those when the purpose of the end-of-term production is, by involving the cast, to entertain the audience and communicate with them bringing across plot, characterization and the team's special interpretation.

I usually advise the many teachers, students, and adventure playground leaders, who visit the Children's Theatre, to devise their own material through improvisation - compilation shows on themes such as "Food", "Friendship", "Nationalities" or work on a storyline about a teenage love story, for example. Improvisation work helps to find out what children really feel and, in my experience, the result is far more believable than when they are reciting the words of the playwright.

My first reaction to this series of five short plays from the Theatre Box Series, which have recently been seen on Thames Television, was that drama teachers and others wanting to put on plays would be put off by the lavish television versions when faced with their own circumstances. The introduction to each play firmly answers that question by stating categorically that the plays can be put on with the minimum equipment but having seen two of them on television I was not convinced.

*The Prince and the Demons* by George Moore is a classic Indian folk tale complete with the elements of good versus evil, a narrator and lots of gory bits - "I will have my cooks build a big fire. Then I will take you and snap off your arms - one, two. Then your legs. And last, twist off your beautiful head. And I will throw each part on the fire and roast it till the soft smooth flesh sings and crackles. Then I will eat you" - and the inevitable happy ending. Though the plot is strong and fast moving the characters are a bit one-dimensional and care would be needed to prevent the narrator from drowning on as narrators sometimes do. This was my least favourite of the five plays but then I do not like "folksy" tales. The drama teacher is the one who has to like the play, however, and I am quite sure that many will love *The Prince and the Demons*.

*You Must Believe All This* by Adrian Mitchell is an adaptation of a Charles Dickens fable about Victorian children, humiliated by adults at a christening party, who get their own back by doing their own "right-of-reply" plays. This is a beautifully constructed piece with music, containing three plays within the play. On first reading it would appear complicated and somewhat ambitious but handled with a great deal of care and attention, which it really deserves, it would make a successful evening's entertainment. Adrian

Mitchell's adaptation, like his poetry, is packed with pacy style and form. The songs all have a period flavour. This play would need a musical director as well as a producer and I would say it should only be put on by a very experienced confident teacher.

*Death Angel* by Brian Glover is right up my street. Modern, and powerful, it pulls no punches metaphorically speaking, but plenty literally as this very imaginative piece uses Brian Glover's experience as a wrestler. It jumps off the page with its gutsy believable characters - "real kids" rough and tough. This play would make an ideal end of term production and there's room for audience participation too. One of my pupils, Gary Beadle, played Fergus in the television production and he said: "What I really liked about it was that the character was like me when I was that age - he believed anything that was told him. The play was different from anything I had done before - you could really get to grips with it."

*Marmalade Atkins* in *Space* by Andrew Davies has wonderfully funny, over the top characters - funny ha ha and funny peculiar. It needs bold extrovert acting especially for the central character, Marmalade. "I can't stand being bored, I go berserk", she says and is very rude to all the adults. This is a comedy

about "the worst girl in the world" and what she gets up to. The fact that it is about a bad girl rather than a good one should appeal to children.

Lastly, *Reasons to be Cheerful* by James Andrew Hall is about a "quite mad" family, the Dribble Family. Mum, Dad plus the son and daughter. They all behave outrageously to one another and the total effect is very funny; the dialogue is witty and lively and there is lots of unfriendly bantering between the Dribbles. A surprise ending is an added bonus.

My overall impression is that here are five extremely well written plays by five professionals; my concern is with the problem of putting them on at an equally professional standard. Most of the parts are weighty - there are as few as four in the cast of *Reasons to be Cheerful* - and therefore from the point of view of the school play there would need to be exceptionally talented actors to perform them. I still feel they were written for television rather than for the live theatre and I am not entirely convinced that they would translate well for most schools. The size of the casts might be a drawback for school production but on the other hand it would be an advantage for Theatre-in-Education, where I think they would work well. The Editor's General Note and the Production Notes in all five plays are excellent.

## A familiar landscape

By John Davies

JOHN GILBERT EVANS:

*Llyfr Hwangerddi y Dref Wen*  
The Dref Wen Book of Welsh Nursery Rhymes

Illustrated by Jenny Williams

Gwasg y Dref Wen Publishers, 28 Church Road, Whitechurch, Cardiff CF4 2EA. £5.95.

This collection of nursery rhymes is an important landmark in the history of the publication of children's books in the Welsh language. Welsh nursery rhymes have a lengthy tradition behind them: the oldest known to us was preserved as marginalia in the earliest manuscript of the sixteenth century poem, the *"Gododdin of Aneirin"*. Collections of them were published from the 1830s onwards, although attention to such frippery was roundly condemned by the stern puritans of Victorian Wales. In the recent past, several attractive anthologies have been produced but this volume is much more ambitious

than any of its predecessors, containing as it does over five hundred rhymes.

While the nineteenth-century collectors were inspired to undertake their task at least in part by J. O. Halliwell's *The Nursery Rhymes of England* (1842), the compiler of this collection, J. G. Evans, owes much to the example of the *Opies*. His scholarly introduction and notes - criticized by one reviewer in the Welsh press as out of place in a children's book - follows the pattern of *The Puffin Book of Nursery Rhymes* in which the *Opies* note: "Even though there will be much that he (the child) cannot immediately understand (for may he not think, and rightly, that this is really a grown-up book?) he will possess it as his own, secure in the knowledge that it can, with his parents' skill, be made to sing the songs he knows and loves".

Accompanying the text are sixty-nine pages of black-and-white drawings and thirty-two pages of illustrations in colour, specially prepared for the book by Jenny Williams. The artist was invited to produce illustrations "that would reflect Wales

visually, just as the rhymes reflect it verbally". She has fulfilled her commission splendidly, portraying with captivating charm an archaic but still familiar landscape. The Wales that is reflected here, both visually and verbally, is a halcyon pre-industrial country, the heavy industry that has dominated it for the last century and a half only very occasionally making its presence felt. The verses depict a land of farms and animals, clyffes and cloggies and a society with a profound sense of place, delighting in the rhythm of its own place-names.

This book is a bold venture in a linguistic community which counts its children in thousands rather than millions. Its publishers, *Gwasg y Dref Wen* of Cardiff, have, over the last ten years, combed Europe, seeking the finest illustrations for their children's books. Hitherto the visual delights that they have prepared for Welsh children have been more likely to emanate from Bulgaria or Hungary than from Wales. This is their first substantial publication to be a wholly home grown product. It is hoped that it will be the first of many.

## Index of books reviewed

Janet and Allan Ahlberg: <i>The Ha Ha Book</i> .....	351	James Marshall: <i>George and Martha</i> .....	346
Peter M. Allen: <i>The Bag of Salt</i> .....	347	<i>Rise and Shine</i> .....	346
Jill Bennett: <i>Trin Trin</i> .....	346	Edward Marshall: <i>Three By the Sea</i> .....	346
Alun Blyth: <i>Cinderella, Lohengrin</i> .....	350	Robert McCrum: <i>The Magic Mouse and the Millionaire</i> .....	347
Franz Brandenberg: <i>Leo and Emily</i> .....	346	Margaret Meek: <i>Learning to Read</i> .....	352
Jean-Claude Brisville: <i>King Oleg</i> .....	347	Adrian Mitchell: <i>You Must Believe All This</i> .....	351
Italo Calvino: <i>L'Uccel Belverde</i> .....	348	George Moore: <i>The Prince and the Demons</i> .....	351
Michelle Cartledge: <i>Teddy Trucks</i> .....	347	Katherine Moore: <i>The Little Stolen Sweep</i> .....	345
Patrick Connor: <i>People at Work, People at Home</i> .....	350	Michael Morpurgo: <i>Miss Writtle's Revenge</i> .....	347
Marcus Crouch: <i>Rainbow Warrior</i> .....	347	Geoffrey Fatterson: <i>The Story of the Three Bears</i> .....	347
Andrew Davies: <i>Marmalade Atkins</i> .....	347	Mary Ray: <i>The Windows of Elissa</i> .....	345
Mike Dickinson: <i>My Dad Doesn't Even Notice</i> .....	351	Eve Rice: <i>Benny Bakes a Cake</i> .....	350
Lois Duncan: <i>I Know What You Did Last Summer</i> .....	343	John Russell Brown: <i>Shakespeare and His Theatre</i> .....	347
John Gilbert Evans: <i>The Dref Wen Book of Welsh Nursery Rhymes</i> .....	352	Svend Otto S: <i>The Giant Fish</i> .....	347
Brian Glover: <i>Death Angel</i> .....	351	George Shannon: <i>Lizard's Song: The Piney Woods Peddler</i> .....	346
M. B. Goffstein: <i>Goldie the Dollmaker</i> .....	351	Peter Smith: <i>Jenny's Baby Brother</i> .....	346
James Andrew Hall: <i>Reasons to be Cheerful</i> .....	347	Catherine Storr: <i>February Yowler</i> .....	344
John Hickson: <i>The Seven Sparrows and the Motor Car Picnic</i> .....	347	Zena Sutherland: <i>Children in Libraries</i> .....	342
F. J. Harvey Darton: <i>Children's Books in England</i> .....	341-2	Mildred D. Taylor: <i>Let the Circle Be Unbroken</i> .....	343
Warwick Hutton: <i>The Nose Tree</i> .....	347	Alison Uttley: <i>Little Grey Rabbit's Party</i> .....	346
M. M. Kaye: <i>Thisledown</i> .....	347	Gabrielle Vincent: <i>Ernest and Celestine, Bravo</i> .....	346
Victor Kelleher: <i>Master of the Grove</i> .....	344	Jane Waller: <i>Below the Green Pond</i> .....	344
Sheila Lavelle: <i>Myrtle Turtle</i> .....	346	Shirley Watababe: <i>I'm the King of the Castle</i> .....	346
Sheila Lavelle: <i>Mr. Gigger's Potato</i> .....	347	<i>I Can Do It</i> .....	350
Robert Leeson: <i>Harold and Bella, Jammy and Me</i> .....	347	Giles Waterfield: <i>Paces</i> .....	347
Penelope Lively: <i>The Revenge of Samuel Stokes</i> .....	345	Nancy Willard: <i>A Visit to William Blake's Inn</i> .....	347
		Kenneth Wood: <i>Shining Armour</i> .....	343

## commentary

## A question of choice

By John Hope Mason

The Assassin  
Greenwich Theatre

For the writer of fiction a concern for politics tends to be more of a pea under the mattress than a pearl in the oyster. Sartre was no exception. As he moved away from the personal and metaphysical preoccupations of his early writings to take an active part in the politics of his time, so he came to abandon fiction. But the change was not abrupt and in the period of transition, the immediate postwar years, he produced some striking work. The play *Les Mains sales*, previously performed in English under the title *Crime Passionnel* and now given in a new translation by Frank Hauser as *The Assassin*, belongs to this period.

In 1948, when the play was first staged, the debate among left-wing intellectuals about whether or not to join the Communist Party was particularly intense. Sartre was not at this time a Marxist and he regarded the Communists' political thinking as naive, rigid and doctrinaire. But they had the largest share of the working class vote and could therefore provide the only possible alternative government. The perennial question of how to relate sincerely held ideals to the messy world of human affairs was accordingly a topical issue.

Sartre first treated this subject in a film script written in 1946. (He had initially given this work the title *Les Mains sales* but later changed it to *L'Engrenage*.) Is it possible to engage in political activity and keep your hands clean, your principles intact? The answer is unequivocal: in a violent world violent means must be used, "purity is a luxury". The issues are clear but the treatment is lifeless; the plot is ingenious but the characters are cardboard. An idealistic writer quarrels with a muscular man of action and a beautiful woman loves them both.

In the play *Les Mains sales* Sartre uses a similar framework to *L'Engrenage* - the main action being in flashback, within the context of a trial - but the treatment has much greater depth. The narrative revolves around Hugo, a young middle-class intellectual who has joined the Communist Party. He longs for a task by which he can prove himself and an opportunity arises when a faction within the Party decides to assassinate Hoederer, the Party Secretary, who is about to deal with the conservatives and liberals. Hugo is picked to carry out the killing and is sent to be Hoederer's secretary. When he meets him, however, Hugo finds that he cannot kill Hoederer. This is not because of any scruples about the use of violence (that is not an issue in this play) but because he dislikes him. Eventually he does kill him, but in ambiguous circumstances.

In the last scene of the play Hugo has come out of prison and wants to rejoin the Party. He learns that, on instructions from Moscow, the Communists have made an alliance with the conservatives and liberals. Hoederer's assassination is therefore an embarrassment and if Hugo wants to work with the Party again he must agree that the murder was a *crime passionnel*. The most important principle for Hugo is that of respecting the truth, not telling lies; on that issue he had quarrelled bitterly with Hoederer. He refuses to betray that principle even though he realizes that means he will now be killed himself. He goes out to his own death, content to have proved himself at last.

When it was first staged the play was seen as being anti-Communist, and it is not hard to see why. The Communist Party is depicted as both devious and ruthless. But Hoederer, excellently portrayed here by

Edward Woodward, is a dedicated Party member who is neither power-mad nor inhuman, neither a fanatic nor a zombie. One of Sartre's most memorable fictional creations, we believe in his love for his fellow-men, in his unselfish (but not blind) courage, and in his sense of limits to the means that might be adopted. The character of Hugo is less successfully drawn. His predicament is that which Sartre had described as the central existentialist situation: if your existence is to be authentic you must choose to become the person you intend to be. The assassination for Hugo (exactly as it is for Orestes in *Les Mouches*) is like a *rite de passage*. Hugo's difficulty in acting on his choice gives the play an effective tension, well realized in this production by Frank Hauser, but the reasons for his difficulty, the reasons for his need, are never convincingly shown. The scenes between him and his wife are very poorly written, and at Greenwich also poorly played. Although we watch the play through Hugo's eyes the emotional life of the piece is elsewhere. The experience of the play does not endorse the importance given to Hugo's problems, and his concern for the truth ends up as being only an occasion for personal heroics, not a serious matter of belief or principle.

## Suits of symbols

By Michael Dummett

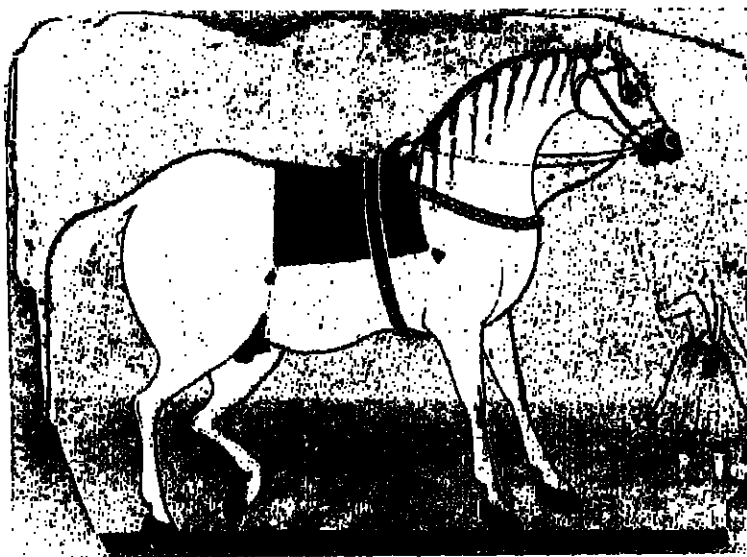
Indian Playing Cards  
Bethnal Green Museum

The Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood is run for everyone, rather than for specialists and scholars; it is a genuine people's museum, of which, sadly, many Londoners must be unaware. The museum has now put on the first of many shows that will make up an exhibition of Indian playing cards from the fine collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The exhibition, arranged by Peter Glen, lasts until May 30. Here, in small compass and in a form very unfamiliar to most people - nowadays even most people in India - will be found illustrated a great variety of Indian art styles, preserved by craft traditions that stretch back over centuries, and uncomplicated by the worries of intellectuals whether to resist or adapt Western influences.

To coincide with the exhibition the V & A has published an illustrated catalogue of its collection of Indian playing cards. (*Ganjifa, the Playing Cards of India*, by Rudolf von Leyden. 128pp. £3.95. 0 905 20917 6.) This is much more than a dealer's catalogue: its first half constitutes a comprehensive account of Indian playing cards - their history, manufacture, design and use. It is especially welcome, both as a treatise on a subject of which no other adequate account exists, and as a catalogue.

Those who unthinkingly assume that playing cards have always and in all places presented essentially the same appearance as do modern European ones will receive an intense surprise. Playing cards have, in fact, as complex a history as any human artefact: their origin and the interrelations of the different types of cards indigenous to various parts of Asia and of Europe are still unsolved. It would be quite wrong to suppose that traditional Indian playing cards are derived from European ones: only a few packs in the present exhibition are adapted from European prototypes. In fact, some scholars believe that playing cards, like chess, originated in India, though this belief is not shared by Dr von Leyden or by this reviewer. At any rate they were known in India at



"Horse and groom", Rajasthani school, c.1660, exhibited in the Image of Man: The Indian perception of the Universe through 2000 years of painting and sculpture, at the Hayward Gallery until June 13.

This is a major disappointment. The issue of political assassination has become more topical in Western Europe since the play was written but on that issue Sartre has little to tell us. We feel that Hugo's need to kill is something of a device, and his character manipulated to suit the needs of the plot. That manipulation, and the skill with which the

plot is handled, are of course similar qualities to the *realpolitik* so effectively displayed by Hoederer. Those elements fired Sartre's imagination. But the youthful idealism of Hugo remains inert. As a result we leave the theatre dissatisfied; as so often with Sartre, the ingenuity and brilliance of his work cannot disguise its all too narrow emotional base.

least from the very beginning of the Mughal Empire, though none of the cards in the exhibition is earlier than the eighteenth century. Some of them are rectangular, but most are circular. All packs of the indigenous kind, known as *ganjifa*, have suits of twelve cards (ten numeral cards and two court figures), distinguished by suit-sign and, usually, background colour. They fall into two main types, Muslim and Hindu. The Muslim, or Mughal, variety has eight suits with wholly secular iconography; the Hindu ones typically have, or sometimes two, suits and one-suit packs, each suit represents one of the incarnations or avatars of Vishnu, such as Rama and Krishna. The Mughal *ganjifa* usually employ the same suit-signs as those known also to have been used in Persia; it is probable that playing cards were introduced into India by the Mughals or earlier Muslim invaders. *Ganjifa* are undoubtedly related to European playing cards, not by direct derivation of either from the other, but, very probably, by descent from a common ancestor.

The V & A collection, though not large, has been assembled with quite remarkable skill so as to include representatives of virtually every type of Indian playing card: the only gap is the absence of those derived from a Portuguese, rather than a French or English, prototype. The exhibition is, however, both enjoyable and instructive quite independently of the

interest of playing cards as such. *Ganjifa*, together with the ornate boxes used to contain them, provide, for purposes of study, an unsurpassed medium for the very diverse styles of Indian folk art. Included are cards from Rajasthan, Kashmir, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Mysore, Orissa and Bengal, allowing a conspectus of a great range of pictorial tradition. But the item that will perhaps be found of greatest interest is a Bengali set painted on ivory formerly belonging to Robert Clive, on loan from Powis Castle: this, like some of the other exhibits, exemplifies an elevated style not classifiable as folk art. To my mind, however, the most beautiful of the cards are two nineteenth-century Kashmiri packs.

The catalogue, though very well illustrated, is no substitute for seeing the actual cards: it cannot convey the variations of size and texture, nor the full impact of the colouring. The exhibits are skilfully mounted. There is just one criticism to be made, namely that there is not enough explanatory matter. Three-quarters of those visiting the exhibition will not know where Orissa and Maharashtra are, unless they buy the catalogue, they will not know, from anything in the exhibition, to what date Indian playing cards go back, or whether they are independent of European ones or derived from them. Two boards, one giving basic information, the other showing a map of India, would remedy this defect.

## Author, Author

Competition No 63

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than April 16. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers to be opened, or failing that the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries should be addressed to the Editor, Times Literary Supplement, PO Box 7, Printing House Square, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8EZ and marked "Author, Author" on the envelope. The solution and results will appear on April 23.

1. She was a superb specimen of a fat girl; and in a glow of orange ribbons and red hair she commanded admiration.

with a moist surface, and eyes so much too small for his moon of a face that they seemed to have been originally made for somebody else, was not at first sight prepossessing. Mrs — got out of the bus backwards. No amount of practice ever made her more agile; the trouble she had with her big bulk amused everyone, and herself. Chipping the handle of each side of the bus door so tightly that the seams of her gloves cracked, she lowered herself cautiously, like a climber, while her feet, overlapping her smart shoes, unhesitatingly scrambled at each step. One or two people asked why the bus made, for one passenger, such a long, dead stop. But on the whole she was famous on this line, for she was constantly in and out of town. The conductor waited behind her, smiling, holding her basket, arms wide to catch her if she should slip.

## New Oxford books: Literature

In Defence of the Imagination  
Helen Gardner

"She writes a direct, lucid, and forceful prose which anyone can understand. The Harvard students to whom these essays were originally addressed as lectures must have found them not only disconcertingly clear but subversive of every fashionable modern orthodoxy.... Her pages shine with learning, with her own pleasure in literature and her own perceptions: there is nothing negative or merely destructive about her criticisms." John Bayley in *The Observer*. £12.50

Roy Campbell  
A Critical Biography  
Peter Alexander

This is the first biography of the poet Roy Campbell. It traces his life from his birth in 1901 to his sudden death in a car crash in 1957. It has been written with the full support of the poet's widow, and, as well as discussing the poems, presents a portrait of a life split by conflicting loyalties, of a lonely and often unhappy man. Illustrated £12.50

Théophile Gautier  
A Romantic Critic of the Visual Arts  
Robert Snell

This book sets out to present an inside view of the nineteenth-century poet and critic Théophile Gautier. It discusses his image of himself, his early career, his life as a journalist and public figure, and the dualism of his nature: his aim as a critic and his view of the artist are characterized, and seen in operation in his writing on Delacroix and Ingres. Illustrated £16

A Pity Youth Does Not Last  
Micheál Ó'Guineen

The series of books about the Greek Black Sea island which includes such classics as *Twenty Years A-Growing* by Maurice O'Sullivan, *The Islander* by Tomás Ó Crohan, and *An Old Woman's Reflections* by Peig Sayers, has won many enthusiastic readers. This is the only English translation of *A Pity Youth Does Not Last* by the son of Peig Sayers, in which he writes of a childhood spent on Great Black Sea and of the changes that finally overtook the old island culture. Illustrated £2.50 Oxford Paperbacks

## Bounds out of Bounds

A Compass for Recent American and British Poetry  
Roberta Berke

In this lively survey of American and British poetry from 1950 to the present, Roberta Berke presents perceptive guidelines for understanding contemporary poetry, and discusses major trends and major artists in translation: poetry over the past generation. £11

## Oxford University Press



## commentary

## An art of transition

By Peter Conrad

Tannhäuser  
Metropolitan Opera, New York  
Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg  
Covent Garden

Wagner intended *Die Meistersinger* as a comic palliation of the tragedy in *Tannhäuser*. Stolzinger when he confronts the mastersingers announces that his model has been Walther von der Vogelweide, rescuing the antique bard from the song-contest at the Wartburg where he is denounced by Tannhäuser as a timid and unsensational poetaster. At the same time, Stolzinger revises Tannhäuser's decadent theory of the artist as renegade and neurotic. Tannhäuser undertakes the artistic vocation as an apprenticeship to vice. His muse, who incarcerates him in the Venusberg, enlightens him by inflaming him. Music itself is a sorcery and an intoxication of the body. When Wagner amplified the Dresden version of *Tannhäuser* for Paris in 1861, he made it — after the event — a precursor of *Tristan*. The new overture is a cauldron of frenzied sound, and it changes the Venusberg from a limbo of moral regress into an ecstatic hell where the artist thrives. Music is now (as Shaw declared it to be in his own inferno) the brandy which is the addition of the damned. The new *Tannhäuser* proposes itself as the better of the unforgotten *Tristan* not the repentant *Parsifal*, and instigates the Wagnerian decadence of the later nineteenth century. In the 1845 Dresden overture the sanctimonious level tread of the pilgrims returns at the end to trample the voluptuous uproar in the Venusberg. In 1861, the revels continue unchastened. The artist's profession is thus declared to be the systematic derangement of the senses, and Beardsley, rewriting *Tannhäuser* in *Under the Hill*, makes the hero a Baudelairean dandy, the adept of illicit and exquisite delights, and Venus a nymphomaniac who saps on the semen of her pet unicorn.

Elisabeth religiously hails Tannhäuser's return and his singing as miracles. But the ultimate miracle which he performs, though accomplished through the agency of her pious sacrifice, is a profanation, as Wagner feels art must be. The pilgrims smugly interpret the flowering of the Pope's staff as a token of redemption; actually, it's a vindication of Tannhäuser who, despite the Pope's edict, can transform actuality

by the fanatical conviction of artistic will. *Die Meistersinger* is also about the miraculous nature of art. Here, however, it's a benediction, the happy materialization of a longed-for dream, instead of the demonic, fantasizing dissatisfaction with reality which goads Tannhäuser. Art is the power to conjure up a vision, to materialize a spirit, as Elsa does in wishing for Lohengrin. Tannhäuser possesses this capacity, but like Elsa is ruined by it: the incarnation of images is a fiendish talent, punished (as the poet discovers in "Kubla Khan") by ostracism.

Stolzinger in *Die Meistersinger* is heir to this power, yet for him it is benign and divinizing. His prize song describes Adam's dream of Eve in paradise, which was, in Keats's view, the initial and prophetic human act of imagination. Assisted by God, that dream came true. So does Stolzinger's. At the end of his song, Elsa stands before him and declares herself his. The deity who, in *Die Meistersinger*, by his intercession makes the immaterial word or poetic vision flesh, is Hans Sachs; he mingles a feat by omniscient intruding and a humour which is — in the properly godly sense — jovial. Sachs declines himself as "ein Schulmeister und Poet dazu" in his noisy song at the work-bench. The poetry is incidental: God is a maker, man (who can only chimerically re-create what God has made, or dream of alternatives to that creation) is, as Stolzinger is instructed to be by Sachs, an artist.

Cursed with an unserviceable production and frustration by the refusal of Jon Vickers to sully himself by impersonating a hero whom he regards (correctly, perhaps) as morally unregenerate, Covent Garden has dropped *Tannhäuser*. The Met this season revives Otto Schenck's production, with James Levine conducting, and shows how magnificently the work can be done. Günther Schneider-Siemssen's designs exploit the schizophrenia in the work. His Venusberg is a grove of dark green icicles, rigidly pornographic, not erotic, which, when Tannhäuser wills himself elsewhere, switches instantaneously (thanks to the Met's magic gadgetry) to a chilly countryside with russet earth and wan sunlight, reverting to the fetid underground during Tannhäuser's final dementia.

Wagner said that performing his works was an art of transition. The wizardry of light achieves this exchange between opposed worlds in the Met's *Tannhäuser*; and the wonderful Elisabeth of Leonie Rysanek — the best there is — shows



A late sixteenth-century dog-headed demon, described in the manuscript of the Demons in Persian and Turkish Art exhibition at the British Library until January 16, 1983.

an understanding of this same principle of transition. Once, rehearsing a production of *Tannhäuser* which Wieland Wagner had staged with the stiff immobility of a scene from a Gothic missal, Rysanek chided Wieland by reminding him that she was a baroque not a Gothic figure. She is indeed: the excitement of her singing and her acting is its agitation and kinesia, its often frantic rapture. But in *Tannhäuser* she undergoes a deathly transition from baroque exultancy to the staturesque, funereal, suffering poise of a Gothic madonna. She begins by rushing into the hall of song, caressing its furniture, sensuously celebrating it (and her own) return to life. She quivers with an animation which is half nervously fearful, half elated, shuddering in Tannhäuser's presence. Her voice soars out of her in an overflow of feelings she can't contain. During the song contest she is sentenced to stillness; but the quality of her concentration keeps her at the dramatic centre in spite of her silence. While she listens, she changes — from admiration to bewilderment, then to embarrassment, at last to nausea and dismay at Tannhäuser's blasphemy — and preceptually dies. Rising from her chair, scarcely able to speak but

defying the censorious men, she makes a last effort of mediation; but in the concluding ensemble of Act II she is already fixed in a Gothic paralysis, and the voice no longer wells from a human body but hovers prayerfully and abstractly in mid-air.

Rysanek's reappearance in Act III is a post-mortem visitation. Prone before the wayside cross at the beginning, she painfully raises herself to sing, then creeps away with an infinite stumbling slowness, walking resignedly out of life. Her colleagues scarcely match Rysanek's genius — Richard Cassilly plays Tannhäuser as a dumb ox, and Mignon Dunn is a vocally shrillish Venus — but there is an impeccable Wolfram from Berno Weikl, whose tonal beauty vouches for the character's generous goodness. Schenck makes clear both the amity and the opposition between Wolfram and Tannhäuser. Wolfram reveres Tannhäuser but hasn't the courage to imitate him; Tannhäuser violently alters reality; Wolfram, in his obituary song about the evening star, can only ineffectually make a metaphor of it.

Covent Garden's *Meistersinger* has weathered a decade in the warehouse and emerges beautifully aged,

the lambent light varnishing its crumbling stone and desiccated timbers. Colin Davis conducts the work for the first time. In the tragic Wagner he tends to brood; here he was best and roughest energetic. Hans Sotin began imposingly as Sachs but became croaky and uncertain of pitch as time went on. Vocal fatigue made him seem casual, not wisely detached, in his long scene with the Stolzinger of Reiner Goldberg, who has a virile, bladed sound, after perhaps for the forging songs of Siegfried than for his hymn to Eva. The Eva to whom he addresses it, Lucia Popp, merits his adoration. She is seraphic in the quintet or when reassuring Stolzinger who pants at the sound of the nightwatchman, but she doesn't act goody Viennese; there's sharp temper in her argument with Sachs, and while she waits for Stolzinger in the street she's as deliberately expectant as Isolde in the nocturnal garden. The intensity of "O Sachs, mein Freund" strains her voice, though in doing so it only makes her portrayal more heart-tearing.

Joining these newcomers is the familiar Beckmesser of Geraint Evans, than whom, as the character brags, there's none better. The signature of an Evans character is in the footwork. He builds his characters from the shoes up — his Wozzeck plods; his Cagliostro struts and minces; and his Beckmesser scurries, scuttling about Sachs's room in a torment of guilt, beetling away from the song contest blighted by shame. Evans touchingly vindicates Beckmesser by showing him to be insecure and cringing failure, pitiful rather than offensive. In Hans Hartleb's production, the moving climax of the work comes after Stolzinger has been awarded the Eve of his vision, when Sachs entices the skulking Beckmesser out of hiding and restores him to the community. The God presiding over this day of judgment is a tolerant comedian, and Geraint Evans scampers across the stage, unable to accredit his luck, to have his sins remitted by Sachs. This gratuitous act of forgiveness — more authentic a benison than the arboreal sprouting of the staff in *Tannhäuser* — and Evans's mute thanks for it seal a notable revival.

"Who are these?" the officer asked the policeman, through the interpreter, pointing to the hillock, where there were about fifty people sitting by this time. "They are our people, Ukrainians. They were seeing people off; they ought to be let out."

The officer started shouting: "Shoot the lot at once! If even one of them gets out of here and starts talking in the city, not a single Jew will turn up tomorrow."

"Come on then! Let's go! Get yourselves up!" the policeman shouted. The people stood up as if they were drunk. Maybe because it was already late the Germans didn't bother to undress this group, but led them through the gap in their clothes.

Dina was in about the second group. They went through the gap and came out into a sand quarry with sides practically overhanging. It was already half-dark, and Dina could not see the quarry properly. One after the other they were hurried along to the left, along a very narrow ledge.

On their left was the side of the quarry, to the right a deep drop; the ledge had apparently been specially cut out for the purposes of the execution, and it was so narrow that as they went along it people instinctively leaned towards the wall of sandstone, so as not to fall in.

Dina looked down and her head swam, she seemed to be so high up. Beneath her was a sea of bodies covered in blood. On the other side of the quarry she could just distinguish the machine-guns which had been set up there and a few German soldiers. They had lit a bonfire and it looked as though they were making coffee on it.

And on pp 216-17 of *The White Hotel*: "It started to get dark. Suddenly an open car drew up and in it was a tall, well-built, smartly turned-out officer with a riding crop in his hand. At his side was a Russian prisoner."

"Who are these?" the officer asked the policeman, through the interpreter, pointing to the hillock, where there were about fifty people sitting by this time. "They are our people, Ukrainians. They were seeing people off; they ought to be let out."

The officer started shouting: "Shoot the lot at once! If even one of them gets out of here and starts talking in the city, not a single Jew will turn up tomorrow."

## 'The White Hotel'

Sir, — I wonder how many readers of D. M. Thomas's *The White Hotel* have been struck by the discrepancy between Mr Thomas's open acknowledgment in his Author's Note, printed in large type, of his debt to Freud ("... I have sometimes quoted from his works and letters, *passim*") and the much less prominent reference printed in minute type on the copyright page, to his "use of material from *Babi Yar* in Part V of his novel."

Many reviewers of *The White Hotel*, and all admirers of the novel of my acquaintance, have singled out Part V as the most imaginative and powerful section of the work. It is in fact a superficially reworked version of the historical accounts in *Babi Yar* of two people who (just) lived through the German occupation of the Ukraine. Many of Thomas's vivid passages of material description, many of his moving accounts of shocking incident, are taken more or less verbatim from *Babi Yar*.

For those who have not read *Babi Yar*, one lengthy quotation will illustrate my point. After the description of the Podol Slum, the German proclamation of the forced deportation of the "Yids" and the herding of the Jews to the railway station, which owe everything to Kuznetsov's own boyhood recollections, he makes use of Dina Pronicheva's story, recorded by Kuznetsov as "I wrote it down from her own words, without adding anything of my own." On pp 108-9 of *Babi Yar* in the translation published by Jonathan Cape in 1970 we have:

"It started to get dark. Suddenly an open car drew up and in it was a tall, well-built, smartly turned-out officer with a riding crop in his hand. ... He had a Russian interpreter at his side."

"Who are these?" the officer asked the policeman through the interpreter, pointing to the hillock, where there were about fifty people sitting by this time.

"They are our people, Ukrainians," the policeman replied. "They didn't know; they ought to be let out."

The officer started shouting: "Shoot the lot at once! If even one of them gets out of here and starts talking in the city, not a single Jew will turn up tomorrow."

"Come on then! Let's go! Get yourselves up!" the policeman shouted.

The people stood up as if they were drunk. Maybe because it was already late the Germans didn't bother to undress this group, but led them through the gap in their clothes.

Dina was in about the second group. They went through the gap and came out into a sand quarry with sides practically overhanging. It was already half-dark, and Dina could not see the quarry properly. One after the other they were hurried along to the left, along a very narrow ledge.

On their left was the side of the quarry, to the right a deep drop; the ledge had apparently been specially cut out for the purposes of the execution, and it was so narrow that as they went along it people instinctively leaned towards the wall of sandstone, so as not to fall in.

Dina looked down and her head swam, she seemed to be so high up. Beneath her was a sea of bodies covered in blood. On the other side of the quarry she could just distinguish the machine-guns which had been set up there and a few German soldiers. They had lit a bonfire and it looked as though they were making coffee on it.

And on pp 216-17 of *The White Hotel*: "It started to get dark. Suddenly an open car drew up and in it was a tall, well-built, smartly turned-out officer with a riding crop in his hand. At his side was a Russian prisoner."

"Who are these?" the officer asked the policeman, through the interpreter, pointing to the hillock, where there were about fifty people sitting by this time. "They are our people, Ukrainians. They were seeing people off; they ought to be let out."

The officer started shouting: "Shoot the lot at once! If even one of them gets out of here and starts talking in the city, not a single Jew will turn up tomorrow."

## to the editor

"Who are these?" the officer asked the policeman, through the interpreter, pointing to the hillock, where there were about fifty people sitting by this time.

"They are our people, Ukrainians. They were seeing people off; they ought to be let out."

Lisa heard the officer shout: "Shoot the lot at once! If even one of them gets out of here and starts talking in the city, not a single Jew will turn up tomorrow."

"Come on then! Let's go! Get yourselves up!" the policeman shouted. The people stood up as if they were drunk. ... Maybe because it was already late the Germans didn't bother to undress this group, but led them through the gap in their clothes.

They went through the gap and came out into a sand quarry with sides practically overhanging. It was already half-dark, and she could not see the quarry properly. One after the other, they were hurried on to the left, along a very narrow ledge.

On their left was the side of the quarry, to the right a deep drop; the ledge had apparently been specially cut out for the purposes of the execution, and it was so narrow that as they went along it people instinctively leaned towards the wall of sandstone, so as not to fall in.

Lisa looked down and her head swam, she seemed so high up. Beneath her was a sea of bodies covered in blood. On the other side of the quarry she could just see the machine guns and a few soldiers. The German soldiers had lit a bonfire and it looked as though they were making coffee on it.

Many such resemblances could be pointed out. It can be argued that Mr Thomas has made moving use of the *Babi Yar* material. But should the author of a fiction choose as his proper subject events which are not only outside his own experience but also, evidently, beyond his own resources of imaginative re-creation?

D. A. KENRICK,  
43 Lamont Road, London SW10 0HS.

## E. E. Cummings

Sir, — John Bayley has many insightful and interesting things to say about the poetry of E. E. Cummings in his review of Cummings's *Complete Poems: 1910-1962* (March 5), but an American must take exception to his remark that "finches, unlike turkeys, do not in fact sing".

I know spring is coming in Connecticut when I hear, from the top branches of a tree that is still bare, a cascade of warbles and roulades, reminiscent, to my ear at least, of the song of the nightingale as I heard it years ago in Turkey. I look up, knowing what I will see: a small bird, drab of colour except when the sun catches a patch of raspberry pink on his throat — a male purple finch asserting his lordship over the neighbouring terrain. This is the bird Cummings addresses in the passage John Bayley quotes. The phrase "eagerly sweet carolling" is a bit sentimental, but by no means inaccurate with reference to his song. We have our oven-birds, our "sayers", but we have our songsters too.

MARIE BORROFF,  
Department of English, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut 06520.

## A Traherne Manuscript

Sir, — Elliot Rose's announcement of the discovery of *Commentaries of Heaven* (March 19) will prove even more exciting to scholars of the seventeenth century than James Osborn's notice of a similar discovery in 1964. Whereas there are now severe doubts about the genuineness of the latter manuscript, moreover, the authenticity of the manuscript in Toronto has now been securely established.

Commentaries of Heaven has obvious similarities to the second part of the Dobell Folio at Oxford, but it is a much more carefully constructed work. In many ways it is similar to *The Church's Year Book* manuscript, which is also at Oxford.

At least one of the "essays" in *Commentaries*, "Aristotle's Philosophy", echoes a similar entry in the Dobell Folio, although both are derived from the second part of Theophilus Gale's *The Court of the Gentiles*. Certainly, as Rose argues, the publication of Gale's work in 1671 provides a probable terminus *quo* for the manuscript. It seems to me also to argue that the manuscript is incomplete because of Traherne's death in 1674.

Most of the entries in the manuscript include at least one poem, usually as a conclusion to a prose essay. And while these are not, on the whole, as attractive as the poems already known by Traherne, they are none the less very similar to the poetry in *Christian Ethics*. The length of these poems varies from a few lines to over 400; there is, in fact, more poetry by Traherne in this manuscript than has previously been known — about 5,000 lines in all. Moreover, unlike the Burrey MS and the Dobell Folio, even the corrections to the poems appear to be entirely in Thomas Traherne's hand, and therefore to have escaped the "improvements" of his brother's editing.

DOUGLAS CHAMBERS,  
63 Aberdeen Road, London N5.

## The Ruskins

Sir, — While I cannot agree with all she says, I welcome Rachel Trickett's survey (March 12) of the recently published studies of John Ruskin. However, I would be grateful if you would allow me to correct one point which she made regarding John Dixon Hunt's book.

Hunt was not, of course, the first to suggest that Effie Ruskin's erring monthly calculations were the initial cause of the non-consumption of the Rusks' marriage. The fact that Nicholas Shrimpton in his review in the *Sunday Times* (February 21) and now Rachel Trickett both attribute this assumption to Hunt indicates that Hunt's footnote on this point is not clear. It was, of course, Mary Lutyens who, in the *TLS* of March 3, 1978, first put forward the tentative suggestion that "Effie's monthly calculations had let her down".

She based her suggestion on a reference in a letter from Ruskin to Effie which contains a reference to

Effie's "trial at Blair Athol" where the honeymoon began, and on another from Ruskin to Effie in which he described his wife as "mine own then for the first time" at "Kew five days after the honeymoon had begun."

Has Professor Hunt discovered new substantiating evidence or has he merely turned Mary Lutyens's suggestion into fact, when he writes "Effie found that she had her period"?

JAMES S. DEARDEN,  
The Ruskin Galleries, Bembidge School, Isle of Wight.

## Austrian National Socialism

Sir, — F. L. Carsten's review of my book, *Hitler and the Forgotten Nazis: A History of Austrian National Socialism* (January 15) has come to my attention and I should like to reply.

When I wrote that "a curtain of silence has been drawn across the history of Austrian National Socialism" I did not mean to imply that nothing whatsoever has been written on the subject. In fact, there has been a good deal written about various aspects of the Austrian Nazi Party as well as other fascist organizations. But with few exceptions, one of which is Professor Carsten's own fine book, *Fascist Movements in Austria*, the works are highly specialized monographs written by scholars for other scholars. Fritz Fellner, one of the most eminent senior historians in Austria today, put it very succinctly in the December 1981 issue of the *Journal of Modern History* where he wrote that "there are only a few Austrians who have made it their special field of research to find out about the realities of National Socialism before and after the Anschluss."

Carsten himself wrote in the preface of his book in 1977 that: "it seems strange that comparatively little work has been done on the fascist movements of Austria."

I appreciate Carsten's pointing out my mistake in citing Hitler's birthplace as the Waldviertel instead of the Innviertel. However, I am surprised that he describes Braunau-am-Inn as being in "extreme western Austria" when in fact it lies exactly midway between the Hungarian and Swiss borders.

I am also mystified about Carsten's assertion that I described Bohemia and Moravia as being "predominantly German-speaking areas". I can find no such statement anywhere in my book although I do

mention that both the northern and southern fringes of the two provinces were inhabited primarily by German-speaking people. I might point out in passing that the period of maximum usage of the German language in Bohemia came in the eighteenth century and not, as Carsten suggests, in the late nineteenth century.

The Passau conference, which Carsten says I ignored, is discussed on pages 45-46, albeit without my mentioning the same facts brought out in *Fascist Movements in Austria*.

I agree with my reviewer that a major contribution of *Hitler and the Forgotten Nazis* is my thesis that the Austrian Nazis frequently acted independently of German Nazi leadership and strove to maintain Austrian autonomy. Although I never called them "misguided patriots" I did write that "not even the most rabid and misguided Nazis thought of themselves as being in any sense traitors. They naively thought they could reconcile their loyalty to Austria with their loyalty to the party." This is not exactly high praise. If the Austrian Nazis were patriots their patriotism fits Samuel Johnson's definition of the word: "the last refuge of a scoundrel".

Far from providing "no evidence to substantiate [my] assertions" I think the documentation for the autonomist strivings of the Austrian Nazis is overwhelming and can be found in every chapter of my book. Even Carsten admits that the Austrian SA favoured "some autonomy" but does not mention that the movement was at least five times larger than the SS which was subordinate to Himmler. And it was SA men such as Josef Leopold who played the leading role in the Austrian Nazi Party until shortly before the Anschluss.

Finally, Professor Carsten's statement that "after the Anschluss the top posts in occupied Austria were given to Germans from the Reich" needs considerable qualification. Although a German, Josef Bürckel, was named by Hitler to be "Reichskommissar for the Reunification of the Ostmark to the Reich", all seven of the new Gauleiters were Austrians, to cite only one example.

BRUCE F. PAULEY,  
Department of History, University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida 32816.

We regret that Kenneth S. Lynn's reference to southeast Asia in his review of Reginald Horsman's *Race and Manifest Destiny* was wrongly printed as "Southwest Asia" (March 12; paragraph 10, line 6).

Among this week's contributors

GEORGINA BATTISCOMBE's most recent book is *Christina Rossetti: A Divided Life*, 1981.

T. J. BRYNOR is a Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford.

ALAN BORO is the Keeper of the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich.

F. L. CARSTEN's books include *Fascist Movements in Austria*, 1977. His *Estimation* was published last month.

MARTIN CLARK is the author of *Antonio Gramsci and the Revolution that Failed*, 1977.

STEPHAN COLLINGS' *Liberalism and Sociology* was published in 1979.

PETER CONRAD's books include *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*, 1977, and *Imagining America*, 1980.

ERIK DE MAUNY was BBC radio correspondent in Moscow from 1972 to 1974.

MICHAEL DUMMETT is Wykeham Professor of Logic at the University of Oxford. His books include *The Game of Truth*, 1980.

STEPHEN GARDINER is Architectural Correspondent of the *Observer*.

GEORGINA BATTISCOMBE's most recent book is *Christina Rossetti: A Divided Life*, 1981.

T. J. BRYNOR is a Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford.

ALAN BORO is the Keeper of the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich.

F. L. CARSTEN's books include *Fascist Movements in Austria*, 1977. His *Estimation* was published last month.

MARTIN CLARK is the author of *Antonio Gramsci and the Revolution that Failed*, 1977.

STEPHAN COLLINGS' *Liberalism and Sociology* was published in 1979.

PETER CONRAD's books include *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*, 1977, and *Imagining America*, 1980.

ERIK DE MAUNY was BBC radio correspondent in Moscow from 1972 to 1974.

MICHAEL DUMMETT is Wykeham Professor of Logic at the University of Oxford. His books include *The Game of Truth*, 1980.

STEPHEN GARDINER is Architectural Correspondent of the *Observer*.

GEORGINA BATTISCOMBE's most recent book is *Christina Rossetti: A Divided Life*, 1981.

T. J. BRYNOR is a Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford.

ALAN BORO is the Keeper of the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich.

F. L. CARSTEN's books include *Fascist Movements in Austria*, 1977. His *Estimation* was published last month.

MARTIN CLARK is the author of *Antonio Gramsci and the Revolution that Failed*, 1977.

STEPHAN COLLINGS' *Liberalism and Sociology* was published in 1979.

PETER CONRAD's books include *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*, 1977, and *Imagining America*, 1980.

ERIK DE MAUNY was BBC radio correspondent in Moscow from 1972 to 1974.

MICHAEL DUMMETT is Wykeham Professor of Logic at the University of Oxford. His books include *The Game of Truth*, 1980.

STEPHEN GARDINER is Architectural Correspondent of the *Observer*.

GEORGINA BATTISCOMBE's most recent book is *Christina Rossetti: A Divided Life*, 1981.

T. J. BRYNOR is a Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford.

ALAN BORO is the Keeper of the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich.

F. L. CARSTEN's books include *Fascist Movements in Austria*, 1977. His *Estimation* was published last month.

MARTIN CLARK is the author of *Antonio Gramsci and the Revolution that Failed*, 1977.

STEPHAN COLLINGS' *Liberalism and Sociology* was published in 1979.

PETER CONRAD's books include *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*, 1977, and *Imagining America*, 1980.

ERIK DE MAUNY was BBC radio correspondent in Moscow from 1972 to 1974.

MICHAEL DUMMETT is Wykeham Professor of Logic at the University of Oxford. His books include *The Game of Truth*, 1980.

STEPHEN GARDINER is Architectural Correspondent of the *Observer*.

GEORGINA BATTISCOMBE's most recent book is *Christina Rossetti: A Divided Life*, 1981.

T. J. BRYNOR is a Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford.

ALAN BORO is the Keeper of the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich.

F. L. CARSTEN's books include *Fascist Movements in Austria*, 1977. His *Estimation* was published last month.

MARTIN CLARK is the author of *Antonio Gramsci and the Revolution that Failed*, 1977.

STEPHAN COLLINGS' *Liberalism and Sociology* was published in 1979.

PETER CONRAD's books include *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*, 1977, and *Imagining America*, 1980.

ERIK DE MAUNY was BBC radio correspondent in Moscow from 1972 to 1974.

MICHAEL DUMMETT is Wykeham Professor of Logic at the University of Oxford. His books include *The Game of Truth*, 1980.



# Workers' play time

By Martin Clark

VICTORIA DE GRAZIA:  
The Culture of Consent  
Mass organisation of leisure in fascist Italy  
311pp. Cambridge University Press.  
£30.  
0 521 23705

Here is the first major study of the *Dopolavoro*, the network of leisure and recreation schemes set up by the Italian Fascists. It is a fascinating theme, and it is appropriate that it is an American scholar who has explored it, for the *Dopolavoro* was invented in the United States, and was originally brought to Italy by industrialists as a device for good personnel management. Even in the late 1930s, when the *Dopolavoro* had three million members, half a million of them were simply using their firm's playing grounds or going on their firm's excursions; the workers at Fiat enjoyed much better facilities than were available to the Turin middle classes. Even so, by then the Fascist syndicalists and politicians had muscled in on the act. They had organized, and were trying to control, the people's leisure.

There were many reasons for doing so. Serious-minded Fascists saw the *Dopolavoro* as an opportunity for practical training and moral education - scouting for adults. The more cynical argued that sport would distract the potentially most dangerous people in the country, the young active men. In any case, pre-Fascist recreation facilities had often been run by Socialists or Catholics, and the Fascists could hardly close them down without offering something in their place. Furthermore, running the *Dopolavoro* would give the local party bosses something harmless to do - quite an important consideration, given their usual ways of spending their time. The regime also needed to provide outlets for the cultural pretensions of provincial intellectuals, and indeed its top leaders included amateur playwrights such as Farnacci and enthusiastic impresarios like Stancie. Above all, the Fascists hoped to "make Italians" new model citizens, sober and patriotic, devoted to hard work and fruitful leisure.

The *Dopolavoro* had, therefore, many tasks. Local Fascists ran cookery classes for housewives, took over amateur dramatics and choral societies, and packed children off to summer holiday camps. They opened

playing fields, they got you a discount at cinemas and shops, and they brought travelling theatre to the provinces - a million people saw open-air plays in 1936. They also ran excursions to historic or artistic sites, in order to teach Italians to cherish their national heritage. In the Depression they provided welfare - bread as well as circus; and, inevitably, they sponsored splendidly bogus folk festivals. All those activities thus acquired political overtones. Even the Italian equivalent of giving Christmas presents became the "Befana Fascista", the "Fascist Epiphany". There were occasional futile efforts to teach people useful skills like typing or chicken-rearing, but on the whole the *Dopolavoro* organizers stuck to leisure. They had virtually cornered the market in it, and they proceeded to turn it into a mass consumer good.

The Fascists were, naturally, much concerned with sport. They believed that it would "teach the working masses to strengthen and reinvigorate themselves, build up their resistance to diseases and, finally, prepare themselves for the fatigue of work and if necessary that of war". So huge numbers of PT instructors were trained, and no festival was complete without a gymnastics competition. Unfortunately, by far the most popular pastime in Italy was "bocce", a form of bowls - distressingly unathletic, and vaguely associated too with the twin evils of drink and socialism. Still, the Fascists made the best of a bad job. They couldn't beat the game, but they could regulate it. They drew up an official code of rules for the first time, and in 1936 they organized the first national championship to celebrate the founding of the Empire. "Bocce" thus became a "Fascist" sport, more or less. Another Fascist sport was "volata", a kind of volleyball, invented and popularized after 1929 to distract Italians from the decadent English game of soccer. It never caught on, and after 1933 it was discreetly abandoned.

In other respects the Fascists had more luck. Skiing became genuinely popular, and was much encouraged by a regime that envisaged its future European wars as likely to be fought in the Alps. But the real achievements were for Italian spectators. Primo Carnera was world heavyweight champion, Bartoli won the "Coup de France", Mussolini's boys won twelve gold medals at the Los Angeles Olympics. Above all, Italy won the soccer World Cup twice (Victoria de Grazia seems not to appreciate fully the magnitude of

this achievement). High sport made excellent propaganda. The Fascist party secretary would start the cyclists off on the Giro d'Italia; the Duce himself handed over the World Cup to his team in 1934.

Did all this conspicuous leisure work? Victoria de Grazia is in two minds. At times she asserts boldly that the *Dopolavoro* was not only popular, it served to legitimize Fascist rule and to reduce unrest. She regards it as a deliberate and successful diversion from Italy's economic woes, and writes that it provided a "decisive support for that consent to Fascist rule essential to Mussolini's continuance in power". At other times she is more cautious. She admits that under Fascism "the masses" (whatever they were) were not really "integrated" (whatever that means) into "the Nation" (whatever that was). The *Dopolavoro* may have helped to form the "Fascist consensus", but that consensus was superficial at best. In any case, the *Dopolavoro* was not militarist enough to suit Fascism's real purposes. This cautious approach seems to me more sensible. If the *Dopolavoro* had never existed, it is improbable that the people would really have risen up and shaken off the Fascist yoke, though it might, perhaps, have had more to grumble about.

Even so, the *Dopolavoro* had a huge impact on Italy. It made standardized, wholesome leisure pursuits available inexpensively to most Italians. That might have happened anyway, sooner or later, but the point is that it happened under political rather than commercial auspices. This tradition has survived. Political parties in Italy today still spend much of their time organizing festivals, and Communist Party branch offices are sometimes mistaken for travel agencies. The *Dopolavoro*

## Into the abyss

By Erik de Mauny

GEORGE CLARE:  
Last Waltz in Vienna  
The Destruction of a Family 1842-1942  
274pp. Macmillan. £8.95.  
0 333 32212 6

The story of what happened to the Jews of Europe in the second quarter of the twentieth century and of their wholesale extermination by the Nazis has by now been told many times and from many different angles, and yet, if one views their fate solely in statistical terms, the mind remains numbed, incredulous and uncomprehending. For over that whole ghastly era there still hangs one leaden question mark: how could some six million people be driven to their doom while the rest of the world, either in genuine ignorance or in wilful blindness, stood impotently by? The figures alone merely record the high water mark of the tragedy without illuminating it. If one is to come anywhere near an understanding of this implacable madness, it can only be done by following the chronicle of individual victims and their families.

In *Last Waltz in Vienna* George Clare has provided just such a chronicle of his own family: it is written with tenderness, with humour, with many penetrating insights into the characters

of his forebears, with their strengths and weaknesses, and it is clear and sharp in focus, devoid of sentimentality. The author was born in Vienna in 1920 as Georg Klar. Both sides of his family had come originally from further east, on his father's side from the Bukovina, on his mother's from Galicia, where Jews still wore the caftan modelled on the dress of the Polish aristocracy. But life in the Austrian capital brought about a radical transformation, and this, and their subsequent fate, are eloquently summed up in the opening chapter.

In many ways the Klars were... typical of Central European Jewry, of people who, within a short space of time, moved from the narrowness of the East-European ghettos into that wide and glamorous world of West-European culture, absorbed it, became an essential part of it, climbed to new heights during the enlightened nineteenth century only to fall so deep into the dark abyss of extinction which our own century had so thoroughly prepared for them.

It was the author's great-grandfather, Herrmann Klar, who launched the family into its Westernized orbit, first, by graduating in medicine and obstetrics at the University of Vienna in 1842, and later by becoming a Regimental Surgeon First Class in the Imperial army, according to family lore being the first Jew to rise to that august position. His son, in turn, went into medicine, attaining the

rank of Captain-Surgeon in the army reserve. The author's father, Ernst Klar, changed direction and in 1909, after graduating from the Vienna Handelsakademie, joined the "Imperial and Royal Privileged" Austrian Länderbank, where, apart from a period of military service in the First World War, he worked happily and successfully for nearly thirty years.

It was a close-knit family, enlivened by mildly eccentric uncles and cousins, dominated by a benevolent matriarch, Grandmother Julie, and although the storm signals were out - in the riots of July 1927, in the even bloodier civil conflict of early 1934, in the Nazi Putsch of July that same year and the assassination of Dollfuss - it is clear that the young Georg still managed to enjoy a comparatively carefree Viennese boyhood.

If that were all, this would be an ordinary story. But the ordinary manifests itself in various guises. There is the ordinariness of quiet lives, pursued in a private universe of family and friends. And there is also, as Hannah Arendt pointed out in her study of Eichmann, the ordinariness of evil. In laying their plans for Austria, the Nazis moved initially with great caution, which was why so many Austrian Jews failed to discern the fatal nature of the gathering threat. Yet this was how Georg Clare saw the *gemittliche* Vienna of his youth when the threat finally materialized.

The whole city behaved like an aroused woman, vibrating, writhing, moaning and sighing lustfully for orgasm and release. This is not purple writing. It is an exact description of what Vienna was and felt like on Monday, 14 March 1938, as Hitler entered her... I know. I was there.

The Klars did not remain in Austria very much longer. By various stratagems, they managed to escape from Vienna. George Clare himself spent some time in Ireland, then moved to Britain in 1941 where he volunteered for the army. His parents, Ernst and Stella Klar, were reunited in Paris, but after the fall of France they were pursued by the Vichy authorities, and sent to *residence assignée* in a small village in the Ardèche. It was there on August 25, 1942, that they were arrested and sent on their last journey together - to the gas ovens of Auschwitz.

Thirty-two years later, George Clare went to St Pierreville in the Ardèche to see what traces he could find of their last days there. He did not discover very much, but out of that journey came this book, and because it is written with such transparent faithfulness, it continues to arouse painful reverberations in the memory long after the last terrible chapter is closed.

*The Destruction of the Jewish Community of Worms 1933-1945: A Study of the Holocaust Experience in Germany* (256pp. New York: The Memorial Committee of Jewish Victims of Nazism from Worms. \$22.50. 0 904964 1 6) by Henry R. Huttenbach is the third and last volume by the same author on this subject.

## Poems by the packet

By M. L. Rosenthal

R. W. FRANKLIN (Editor):  
The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson: A Facsimile Edition  
Two volumes, 1,442pp. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.  
£39.50 the set.  
0 674 54328 0  
DAVID PORTER:  
Dickinson: The Modern Idiom  
316pp. Harvard University Press.  
£14.  
0 674 20444 1

Everyone knows the basic facts. The author of some 1,800 poems, Emily Dickinson reluctantly published only seven of them during her lifetime (1830-86). Although she sent hundreds of poems to friends, she was resolute in her belief that "Publication - is the Auction / Of the mind of Man", reducing the human spirit to "Disgrace of Price". But after her death her sister Lavinia found the great mass of manuscripts and persuaded Mabel Loomis Todd and Thomas Wentworth Higginson to begin editing and publishing them. Their first selected volume, *Poems by Emily Dickinson* (1890), was an instant success. Since then five additional collections, all containing startling numbers of new poems, have appeared. The culmination of the series was T. H. Johnson's three-volume variorum edition, *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* (1955), containing 1,775 poems, with manuscript variants, and a wealth of essential bibliographical information.

R. W. Franklin's facsimile edition of *The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson* has brought us one step closer to a full understanding of her oeuvre. Ever since the 1955 *Poems* appeared, its sheer copiousness has made it difficult for criticism to deal with readily - to discriminate among the poems, to discern any sort of development, and (especially) to reconcile the most forceful and passionate of the poems with the lesser, more arch or whimsical or naively thoughtful or pious. But the Johnson edition, without being organized accordingly, drew attention to the fact that, beginning in 1858, Emily Dickinson began to arrange all her poems in fascicles - folded sheets of paper which she stitched together and on which she wrote fair copies of separate groups of the poems, not necessarily in order of composition. Each fascicle contains between eleven and twenty-five poems and constitutes a separate poetic sequence; the ordering and interrelationship of the poems have an organic structure similar to that of the *Song of Myself* or *The Waste Land* or one of Pound's groupings of cantos. By the end of 1864 the poet had put together forty of these fascicles, containing almost half of all her known manuscripts. Thereafter, she continued making fair copies on sheets containing one or more poems but no longer stitched the sheets together. By 1862, in fact, she had begun putting some of her poems on separate sheets only, which Franklin has grouped by "sets" that seem to go together on the basis of their evidence, such as the kind of paper the poet used.

The Franklin edition reproduces the manuscripts of the separate fascicles and sets, so that we can see how Dickinson wrote out her poems and indicated variant readings she was considering. A crucial decision by Dickinson's first editors - made almost unconsciously in their zeal to find poems they thought especially worthy of publication - was to untie the fascicles and select poems without regard to the poet's arrangement. Mrs Todd kept a record of where the pieces came from, but over the years confusion arose, partly because the manuscripts were divided between two households and partly because the editing was done by so many unprofessional hands. For these reasons, and because Dickinson's groupings were not taken seriously, the Franklin edition is the first to present the poems as she arranged them, in her very clear

hand, with all her idiosyncrasies of punctuation, capitalization and spelling, and with her tidy notations of possible alternative words and phrases revealed. We thus see Dickinson's major work just as she did before it began to be sold in the "Auction / Of the Mind of Man". (The text does not include the many poems written on stray scraps of paper of all sorts, especially in the later years.)

It is to be hoped that a reader's edition of the fascicles alone will now also be published. Reading these sequences and near-sequences will allow the poems to be grasped as integral parts of larger though manageable structures. Franklin's labours in rearranging the poems within each fascicle and in arranging the fascicles in chronological order (as well as correcting earlier probable mistakes in the placing of a number of poems in the wrong fascicles) have been indispensable. *The Manuscript Books* comes to us now as tangible proof of the importance of the fascicles for an understanding of Emily Dickinson's art. The "sets", deliberately left unstitched by the poet, contain important poems but are not structured sequences; we do not know what internal order, if any, she may have intended among the sheets that supposedly may be grouped together. But the fascicles have a great deal to teach us.

It is easy now, for instance, to discern the development from the relatively slighter pieces of Fascicle 1 (1858), with its mixture of whimsy and elegiac tones, through the confrontations in the interlocking fascicles 15 and 16 (about 1862) that make up a powerful double sequence, to the mature balance of Fascicle 40 (1864), its Yeatsian notes and parallels with Mallarmé's *Un Coup de dés* and with any number of twentieth-century poems. We should note something else: the way that Dickinson absorbed the pressure of the Civil War into her unique idiom of chillingly impersonal (that is, Confessional) familiarity with pain, grief, and death. "Death," she had written in Fascicle 1, is "but our rapt attention / To Immortality." In the fascicle's most arresting poem, "The feet of people walking home" (21 in Johnson's edition), this became an appalled detachment, almost cheerful if we ignore the skull beneath the skin. All this is echoed in the final fascicle in poem 970:

Color - Caste - Denomination -  
These - are Time's Affairs -  
Death's diviner Clarifying  
Does not know they are -  
As in sleep - All Hue forgotten -  
Tenets - put behind -  
Death's large - Democratic fingers  
Rub away the Brand  
And again, more subtly and daringly in poem 971:

Robbed by Death - but that was easy -  
To the falling Eye  
I could hold the latest Glowing -  
Robbed by Liberty  
For her Jugular Defences -  
This, too, I endured -  
Flot of Glory - it afforded -  
For the Brave Beloved -  
Fraud of Distance - Fraud of Danger,  
Fraud of Death - to Bear -  
It is Bounty - to Suspense's  
Vague Calamity -  
Staking our entire Possession  
On a Fair's result -  
Then - Seasawing - coolly - on it -  
Trying if it split -

In reproducing the fascicles in their proper order, Franklin has found it necessary to re-number them. Originally Mrs Todd assigned arbitrary numbers to them for reasons of practical convenience, and this numbering was followed by Johnson and his associate, Theodore Ward, in their monumental enterprise of sorting out the texts and trying to place the poems in their proper contexts and chronological order. Franklin, of course, provides careful comparative lists showing precisely how he has altered the Todd-Johnson-Ward numbering. Their Fascicles 26 and 32, for instance, are now numbered 15 and 16; and nine poems that they placed at the end of 26 now come at the end of 14.

I mention this technicality because it is the clue to the significance of

Franklin's dating of the fascicles and of his publication of them in the most accurate order determinable. Some years ago S. M. Gill pointed out to me the probable importance of the fascicles as artistic constructs, rather than as mere devices of a desperate orderliness. Other students of Dickinson, notably Ruth Miller in *The Poetry of Emily Dickinson*, have given thought to the fascicles and their ordering: Miller finds that each fascicle repeats a symbolic narrative in which a woman learns Christian acceptance and patience, and that Dickinson's work is deeply influenced by Francis Quarles's *Emblems, Divine and Moral*. But apart from the fact that one is hard put to trace the suggested symbolic development in the actual poems, they can hardly be reduced to a formula. Dickinson wrote, over a relatively short period of time, a large number of poems of high intensity. She arranged them into physically linked, open and exploratory structures that enabled her to give tentative order to the chaos of emotions with which the writing was seized, and in so doing became, along with Whitman but unknown to either, his fellow-inventor of the modern lyrical sequence.

This becomes evident when the fascicles are examined as poetic rather than thematic structures. Looking at the numbering and stitching worked out by Johnson and Ward, Gill and I found that Fascicles 26 and 32 seemed the most powerful and, in fact, *reciprocal* in the sense in which Yeats's "Meditations in Time of Civil War" and "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen" constitute a double sequence. In Franklin's re-creation, it turns out that the two groups are close to one another in time, and the revised order (with the shifting of nine poems from Fascicle 15 to the fascicle just before them) gives them greater impact and reciprocity. They progress from the shock of destructive experience evoked in "The first Day's Night had come" (410), "The Color of the Grave is Green" (411), and "Twice like a Maelstrom, with a Notch" (414) - three poems of pain, loss, and moral agony at the start of what is now Fascicle 15 - to the remote, qualified affirmations of the final group of poems in what is now Fascicle 16, especially "When we stand on the tops of Things" (242) and "He showed me Heights I never saw" (446). The inner dynamics of the fascicles reveal the course of Dickinson's poetic maturing as nothing else can, while - not really paradoxically - throwing into relief major poems whose discovery will come as a surprise to even the most knowledgeable reader.

David Porter's *Dickinson: The Modern Idiom* is filled with excellent isolated perceptions. He views her work as having "cut through to the root modernism visible in American poetry of the last several years", particularly, it would seem, the Confessional poets and the feminist poets whose perspective is encapsulated in Adrienne Rich's title *Diving into the Wreck*. He discusses her "after-vision" or poetry of the aftermath of catastrophe, reaching into and beyond death itself, and argues that the "poetic strategies" this engendered "made possible the achievement of a poetry that keeps its sensibilities intact while taking as its ground the waste of inward desolation". Such poetry shows how "psychic schema stand at the origin of poetic form".

These are interesting if not absolutely original formulations by a sensitive reader, but Porter's analyses lead to general propositions that are hardly self-evident. His most debatable pronouncement reflects his ultimately negative assessment both of Dickinson's poetry and of much contemporary writing. Equating her spontaneity with "the destructive strain in American modernism", he speaks of her "autogenetic" style: an idiom of subjectlessness, one that holds no dialogue with history and thus has no location in it, cannot see time or duration, and borders finally on that most inviting but distracting of final resorts, a retreat from reason.

This is the sort of thing Lawrence would have called sinning against the Holy Ghost. It really has nothing to do with the poems that Emily Dickinson wrote. What is "subjectless" about a poem that begins

The Color of the Grave is Green -  
The Outer Grave - I mean -  
You would not know it Field -

Except it own a Stone - ?  
Or historically unaware about this:  
Flags, are a brave sight -  
But no true Eye  
Ever went by One -  
Steadily

Mosses triumphant -  
But the fine Ear  
Winces with delight  
Are Drums too near - ?  
And where is the retreat from reason in these lines?

Drowning is not so pitiful  
As the attempt to rise.  
Three times, 'tis said, a sinking man  
Comes up to face the skies,  
And then declines forever  
To that abhorred abode.  
Where hope and her part company -  
For he is grasped of God.  
The Maker's cordial visage,  
However good to see,  
Is shunned, we must admit it  
Like an adversary.

Porter finds no development, no poetic purpose, no perspective or

larger sense of formal structure in Dickinson: "no large structure for her poetic energies", "a poet without an urgent sense of structural wholeness". Dismissing the significance of those "curious packets", the fascicles, he admits her genius while thinking her the very model of a modern poetic sensibility bent on self-immolation and lacking philosophical "comprehension" despite intense "consciousness" of feeling.

Porter insists too much on discursive values, and does not allow the poems to instruct him. Though fully aware of the fascicles, he does what he accuses Dickinson of doing: refuses to allow acute consciousness to develop into comprehension. What, for us, is the real bearing of Dickinson's abjuring publication even while she wrote so intensely and tried her best to organize her poems in richly interactive groupings? It must have had something to do with that high poetic virtue of disregarding one's possible effect on an immediate audience, and seeking a poetry that counts at every turn and is not weakened by rhetoric. *Dickinson: the Modern Idiom* is intelligent and thoughtful, despite its strange resistance to the full meaning of Dickinson's work, but because of that resistance it does not deal with her greater poems in their proper context - or even in themselves.

Fine novels from fine writers:

NINA BAWDEN

Her new children's classic—about secrets & the reasons for keeping them. "Without question one of the very best writers for children"—Daily Telegraph £5.50

'KEPT IN THE DARK'

MILDRED D. TAYLOR

Author of Newbery Medal winning 'Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry'—An outstandingly gripping narrative—Naomi Mitchison (TLS). The courage, love & dignity of the black Logan family continue to sustain them £6.50

'LET THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN'

Gollancz

BOOKS FOR THE BLIND

This is the Centenary Year of the National Library for the Blind, which has supplied specially prepared books in Braille and Moon on free loan to the sightless since 1882, enabling them to share the pleasures of reading. Please help us to continue to lighten their burden of darkness.

Legacies, donations and subscriptions are urgently needed and will be gratefully received by the Secretary.

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN President: The Marquis of Normandy, C.B.E.

17 SOUTHAMPTON PLACE, WC2A 2EH

(Registered under National Assistance Act, 1948)

Adam & Charles Black

The essential reference book

Who's Who 1982

is now available



£40

Forthcoming Special Numbers in the Times Literary Supplement are as follows:

Apr 2 London Book Fair

Apr 9 Religion

For further details please contact:

CHRISTOPHER LORNE

Advertising Manager

on

01-837 1234

Extn. 7736

## Heightening the humdrum

By Tom Phillips

JUDITH HERZBERG (Editor):  
Charlotte: Life or Theatre?  
An Autobiographical play by Charlotte Salomon  
Translated by Lella Vennewitz  
784pp. Allen Lane. £30.  
0 7139 1425 4

Charlotte Salomon was born in 1917 into a family of cultured Berlin Jews. In 1939 she fled to the south of France, where, staying with her grandparents, she spent the last two years of her life describing the previous twenty-four, in a sequence of 1,325 gouaches with accompanying texts, some of these latter were incorporated into the paintings, others presented as sheets of calligraphy. She entrusted the work to the local doctor with the words: "Look after them. It is my whole life." Together they form a strange unified work of autobiography, simultaneously humdrum and heightened, whose original title was "Leben und Theater: ein Spielplan". The form is unique in that the elements of the Wagnerian "Gesamtkunstwerk" are here present in the lowest order of priority, with the visual as the primary mode of expression, supplemented by a fully integrated text: the music for her Sing-spiel (to use the more familiar spelling) is a pot-pourri of classical and popular tunes which underline the action, and serve as imagined accompaniments. The piece is not written for performance but is theatre in the sense that it is formed of dialogue in the theatre of emotion provided by her family and its circle.

The central drama concerns Charlotte's relationship with "Daberlohn", a voice teacher with extreme views on art and life who comes to work with her stepmother "Pauline", a well-known opera-singer, with whom he forms an attachment which is soon transferred to Charlotte herself. Under the influence of Daberlohn, before his death in 1942, he exerted a considerable influence on a number of English singers and actors, notably Roy Hart who founded a communal theatre which apparently embodied Wolfsohn's precepts in much of its work and life. Wolfsohn seems to have been a figure somewhat akin to Artur in his effect on a few committed disciples. It is one of Charlotte Salomon's great strengths that, drawing inspiration from Daberlohn's example, she can still depict, with humour and compassion, his failings and absurdities, as well as his compelling personality and ideas. He appears in the paradigm of the obsessive visionary con-

demned to be scorned by the world at large; yet not a mere caricature of the type since the artist has projected on to him a saving complexity of doubt.

Charlotte is lavishly produced, and deservedly so. All the paintings are well reproduced in the colour that is so necessary to their evocation of mood. Those pages containing calligraphy alone are not reproduced as such, which must necessarily affect the intended pace of the work. The omission however is understandable, since the book as issued already verges on the unwieldy. The text, which is set typographically, is by and large sensitively translated (where one can check against the original) although on occasion a plain idiom in the German is replaced by a fanciful one in English (eg "Denn ich habe heut' schrecklich wenig Zeit", becomes "I'm dreadfully strapped for time today"). Such blemishes seem to be mercifully few, and the open-souled honesty of the artist shines through unobscured.

Charlotte Salomon died in Auschwitz in 1943. Her work however is of an order so fulfilled, dense and challenging that the tragedy of this fact can be recorded as a biographical detail in an account of her achievement. She was a remarkable writer and artist by any standard.

attempting every detail as best she may. In the latter stages of the work pressure of time produced a panicked but effective shorthand.

Most of Charlotte's clandestine meetings with Daberlohn take place in a bleak and seemingly unoccupied café. The relationship is strained, since the much older man is seeking (as he had with her stepmother) to gain a Svengali-like hold over his protégée. He emerges, in fact, as one of those figures often met with in the artistic life of the period, who must be either a charlatan or a genius and could be nothing in between. In her foreword, Judith Herzberg relates how she traced the real-life Daberlohn, Alfred Wolfsohn, to England where, before his death in 1962, he exerted a considerable influence on a number of English singers and actors, notably Roy Hart who founded a communal theatre which apparently embodied Wolfsohn's precepts in much of its work and life. Wolfsohn seems to have been a figure somewhat akin to Artur in his effect on a few committed disciples. It is one of Charlotte Salomon's great strengths that, drawing inspiration from Daberlohn's example, she can still depict, with humour and compassion, his failings and absurdities, as well as his compelling personality and ideas. He appears in the paradigm of the obsessive visionary con-

demned to be scorned by the world at large; yet not a mere caricature of the type since the artist has projected on to him a saving complexity of doubt.

Charlotte is lavishly produced, and deservedly so. All the paintings are well reproduced in the colour that is so necessary to their evocation of mood. Those pages containing calligraphy alone are not reproduced as such, which must necessarily affect the intended pace of the work. The omission however is understandable, since the book as issued already verges on the unwieldy. The text, which is set typographically, is by and large sensitively translated (where one can check against the original) although on occasion a plain idiom in the German is replaced by a fanciful one in English (eg "Denn ich habe heut' schrecklich wenig Zeit", becomes "I'm dreadfully strapped for time today"). Such blemishes seem to be mercifully few, and the open-souled honesty of the artist shines through unobscured.

Charlotte Salomon died in Auschwitz in 1943. Her work however is of an order so fulfilled, dense and challenging that the tragedy of this fact can be recorded as a biographical detail in an account of her achievement. She was a remarkable writer and artist by any standard.

مكتبة الأصيل



# Our faces, their fortunes

By Brian Harrison

MARGARET ALLEN:  
Selling Dreams  
Inside the Beauty Business  
286pp. Dent. £7.95.  
0 460 04415 X

Anyone visiting present-day Britain from an earlier age could not fail to be struck by the pleasant, clean, well-dressed and standardized appearance of most of the people he met in the street. If the average person in Britain nowadays is relatively prepossessing, this is partly because disfiguring diseases like smallpox have vanished. For the old radical William Lovett in 1876, the "seamed and scarred faces" of seventy years before had become but a memory. Improvement also owes much to advances in plastic surgery, which have virtually banished harelips and visible birthmarks.

The ugliness which springs from malnutrition persisted well into the twentieth century. Writing in 1886, Lord Brougham noted that anyone of average height who entered the poorer areas of east and south London would "find himself a head taller than those around him" and would see "on all sides pale faces, stunted figures, debilitated forms, narrow chests". So affected by the trade cycle was the diet of the poor, that during the late-Victorian era the height and weight of children were found to correlate with the economic situation at the time of their birth. Edwardian Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates at the age of twenty were on average thirty pounds heavier and over three inches taller than eighteen-year-olds recruited for the army in 1918 from the West Midlands and the North-West.

But appearances are also influenced by attitudes. The nineteenth-century upper classes were not only better fed; they advertised their charms with the aid of complaint artists and photographers, they co-opted the most beautiful women from other classes and appropriated as personal servants the most handsome among their inferiors. The gulf between rich and poor came to seem divinely ordained, morality seemed stamped upon the countenance, political subversiveness correlated with personal ugliness. The mob that threatened to emerge from the back streets offended the eye as well as the political taste, and the cartoonist portrayed the Fenian conspirator as wild and apellike in appearance.

Even a former Labour leader, like Ramsay MacDonald, could, in his diary, seize upon the ugliness of his opponents at Seaham at the general election of 1935: "Many of the faces of the women were lined with destitution, their eyes flamed and gleamed with hate and passion; their hair was dishevelled and their skin one with loathing and fear, just like French Revolution studies." As late as 1942, George Orwell noted how middle and upper-class conscripts on registering for military service looked on average ten years younger than the rest, if only because they were reluctant to give way to middle age.

In the age of phenology, variation in personal appearance was a type of inequality that greatly interested philosophers and scientists, but the subject now commands little attention from academics outside the departments of anthropology and plastic surgery. Still less does it interest the politician. Yet its history deserves discussion.

The growth of modern industry at first did little for personal hygiene and appearance. If herded people indiscriminately from country into town, and it was as difficult to keep clean in the Victorian slum and factory as in the farmyard. Drunkenness, street fights and slum vermin produced many scarred faces and missing teeth. In the long term, however, industrialization produced an affluence which made cleanliness feasible and at the same time encouraged an outlook on life which made cleanliness seem desirable. Furthermore, industry's association with science and political progress-

iveness eventually developed the mass sanitation, dentistry, health care and public welfare which have done much to equalize access to good looks for all social classes.

During the twentieth century cleanliness became easier with the advent of running water and the spread of the bathroom, and domesticity made strides at the expense of communal violence and the pub. These influences were only partially counteracted by the disfiguring injuries resulting from the two world wars, and were reinforced by educational pressures for improved hygiene. In the early days of the school medical service, more than three-quarters of the children were pronounced in some degree dirty, but by 1934 the figure was only twenty-seven per thousand. Squints and bad teeth have been gradually curbed by the spread of spectacles and the toothbrush, and bad figures and bad skins have retreated before extended birth control, improved diet and better medical care. No longer is it common to raise money through exhibiting one's deformities, nor is it thought right to profit from publicly displaying freckles.

In 1971 Robert Roberts could therefore look back on his slum childhood in Edwardian Salford in a mood that was far from nostalgic; its women were "broken and aged with childbearing", he says, not to mention "the soiled complexions, the mouths full of rotten teeth, the varicose veins, the ignorance of simple hygiene, the intelligence stifled and the endless battle merely to keep clean".

Margaret Allen would probably also stress the contribution made by a highly competitive industry with a direct interest in improved personal hygiene: the cosmetics business. She notes that many of its great names (including 4711 Eau de Cologne) date from the eighteenth century, and that the nineteenth century contributed some of the big modern combines such as Colgate and Rimmel, as well as some of the most famous brand-names - Vaseline, Nivea Creme and House of Guerlain. The industry "can never be despised as dull, uneventful or lacking in drama", she says, and her enthusiasm for it generates a ray style which sweeps the reader along to often bizarre destinations.

As a journalist specializing in finance and business, Margaret Allen has written a book (primarily for Americans) that is designed to sell. It therefore lacks those requirements that academics tend to impose: there are no footnotes, no bibliography, no guide to where her "hundreds of hours of interviews" can be found. The book is somewhat shapeless, and never clearly defines its subject or its pattern of analysis. Why, for instance, is so little said about the French cosmetics industry by comparison with the British and American, given its admitted importance? Why are some firms discussed in detail and others (Coty, Ponds, Pears, Rimmel) barely at all? Details are too often repeated at different points in the book, and arrangement is too random; why, after four chapters on twentieth-century cosmetics entrepreneurs, should we be suddenly transported back, in Chapter 5, to ancient Egypt for the book's brief historical excursus?

Yet Margaret Allen has at least had the imagination to see the potential of her subject, and *Selling Dreams* will no doubt stimulate others to follow on later with greater documentation and method. The fascination of her subject is unquestionable.

In her earlier, and best, chapters, the author brings out the fierce competition between the industry's twentieth-century pioneers, for her main interest does not lie in the social impact made by cosmetics, nor even in the process of their manufacture and sale, but in the outlook of the entrepreneur; she is preoccupied, in other words, with the world of the merger and the takeover bid.

"Elizabeth Arden", Margaret Allen begins, "was not a nice woman"; her battle to the death with Helena Rubinstein is described with zest. Both women launched their

businesses during the first decade of the twentieth century with energy, imagination and some ruthlessness. Their values are perhaps well captured by Elizabeth Arden's alleged remark that "to be Catholic or Jewish isn't chic; chic is Ecclesiastical". David McConnell of the California Perfume Company (ancestor of Avon Products) began as a Bible salesman but eventually found that his customers preferred his perfume samples to the Bibles.

In 1931 Charles Revson arrived on the scene with his nail varnish, and his flair for publicity enabled Revlon ultimately to sweep the board. Like Max Factor in Hollywood in the 1930s, Revson linked his fortunes with the growth of the mass media. Like Arden and Rubinstein, he combined energy and imagination with an unhappy personal life. The cosmetics industry went from strength to strength, even during the Depression, and was actually encouraged during the Second World War by governments which saw lipstick as a boost for women war-workers' morale.

In the 1960s entrepreneurs like Mary Quant could still fight their way into the industry, but self-confidence and a shrewd eye for blacked (health fairs, unguents for blacks) were required; the industry was becoming increasingly international, increasingly dominated by the big industrial conglomerates. Government insistence on safeguarding health by stringent testing of products has raised still higher the barriers against the small man. Product-planning departments study market trends, advertising experts design the product's profile, packaging departments devise irresistible boxes and bottles, laboratories test out the product (usually on rabbits), and a price - which bears no necessary relation to the cost of the ingredients - is decided upon.

It is refreshing to think that all this effort sometimes fails - with Max Factor's "Maxi", for example, with those awful vaginal deodorants of the 1970s, or with Helena Rubinstein's "Skin Life Instant Beauty Analyzer" of 1977. For Margaret Allen is surely describing the unacceptable face of capitalism, cynical in its exploitation of dreams and illusions, ugly in the ruthlessness of its cut-throat competition, corrupting in its playing upon human vanity, wasteful in its misdirection of resources. Avon Cosmetics, Mar-

## At the mercy of the market

By Kerry Schott

THOMAS SOWELL:  
Markets and Minorities  
141pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £7.95.  
0 631 12674 0

As the United States slips into recession many commentators are concerned about the particular impact of President Reagan's policies on ethnic minorities. Poverty, it is feared, will increase among already relatively poor people. For the policies of the current administration to gain credence they at least need some theoretical underwriting and this in part is what this study offers. The Hoover Institution has already laid claim to several aspects of Reagan's policy and this new contribution, by a black Chicago-trained economist, adds to their theoretical armoury. Thomas Sowell claims that his central purpose is economic analysis; but for many readers the major interest of the book will be the policy towards ethnic minorities implicit in his analysis.

First, Sowell argues that ethnic minorities in the United States are not really as divergent from the national average as one may suppose. Jewish, Chinese and Japanese families, for example, earn more than the average - but they contain more workers and fewer children, and are more favourably located

geographically. By contrast, Mexican Americans, blacks and American Indians have more children, and are less favourably located, and the apparent racial discrimination of which they are the victims partly reflects this. Thus, what may appear as racial discrimination may depend in part on where you live and the size and composition of your family.

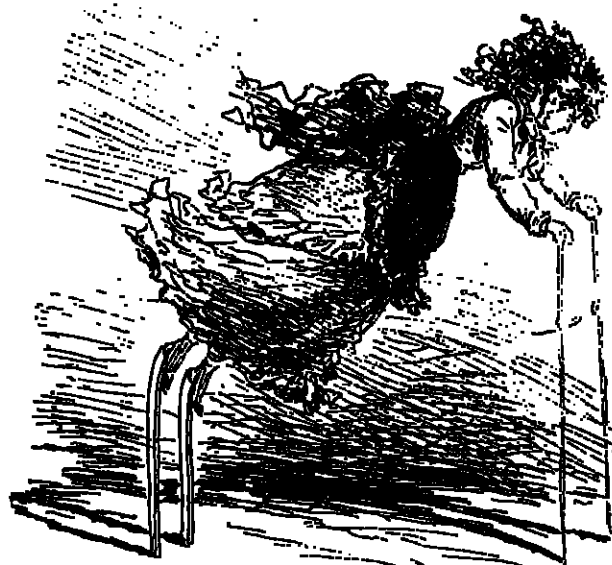
It is not exactly news that family size and geographical location are related to poverty but the relationship is frequently thought to be more complex than is suggested here. The policy implication of Sowell's approach is that the state should not interfere. People are simply choosing the sort of life they want and there is no reason why government should not let them get on with it.

But this is hardly a strong theoretical reason for non-interference and the rest of the book goes on to suggest that whatever the economic situation is for ethnic groups, the free market serves them better than government interference would. Competition is efficient at removing discrimination and the more competitive the market the less the discrimination. Not hiring good black baseball players may cause you to lose the National League; while not hiring blacks in regulated industries is of little consequence since the higher costs can simply be passed on to consumers. More efficient markets are what is needed.

Social reformers have only made things worse, according to Sowell.

The well-fed British parliament of 1847, which passed legislation improving conditions on boats to the United States, raised the cost of travel and left potential Irish immigrants at home to face famine and bleak future. The same is true of reforms across the Atlantic who stopped the indentured system of labour, so that potential immigrants could no longer borrow the cost of their passage in return for years of indentured labour on arrival. More recently, slum clearance and urban renewal programmes have given the poor better housing than they would have preferred to have. People can choose to spend their incomes on either housing or non-housing goods, and if the standard of housing provided is higher than it would otherwise have been, this is bound to lower what can be spent on other items. Thus, the preferences of low-income groups are constrained and their satisfaction falls.

The trouble here lies in the unrepresentativeness of Connolly's chosen prototype. One would need to be convinced by psephological evidence that the "youngest contingents" of white American workers have defected from the vast Republican majorities in the 1980 elections. For conceptual purposes the example is equivocal. It does not apply to other American social groups: to farmers, tradesmen, organization men, highly skilled workers, scientists, technicians, architects, doctors, nurses, etc. What is negated in "the ideology of sacrifice" is first the pursuit of creativity in one's daily work, which is one of the *raison d'être* of all civilizations - and notably of modern American civilization. This is a stronger motive in life than helping one's children to transcend one's own circumstances. What is also consigned to the realm of trivia in the liberal sense of the word is a contentment with the fruits of one's work. These are the human elements of the ends of productivity and leisure which can hardly be corroded by the theories



La façon de marcher avec les nouveaux talons de bottines.  
Head over high heels. This stilted instruction for French women threatened by fashion, which originally appeared in L'Esprit Follet (May 4, 1872), is included in Fashion and Fetishism: A Social History of the Corset, Tight-Lacing and Other Forms of Body-Sculpture in the West by David Kunzle (359 pp. Rowan and Littlefield/George Prior. £14.95. 0 8476 6276 4).

The century of women's rights and votes has also been the century of the permanent wave; Charles Nessler developed it in 1905, the year when Mrs Pankhurst began turning her attentions from Lancashire to London. Charlotte Perkins Gilman confidently linked women's over-ornamentation to their economic exploitation, and her views were echoed by the leading British feminists. Eva Hubback was shocked to find her daughter visiting seven different shops in search of the exact shade of emerald green silk she needed for a dress.

Yet by 1934 Sylvia Pankhurst was complaining of the reaction against "the ideal of an intellectual and emancipated womanhood, for which the pioneers toiled and suffered, to be seen in painted lips and nails, and the return of trailing skirts and other absurdities of dress." Sylvia Pankhurst's own indifference to appearances went too far; there is no virtue in a drab utilitarianism, let alone in a self-conscious refusal to please. But she would undoubtedly not have used Margaret Allen's term "mature" to describe a British cosmetics market which has reached saturation point. Maturity, she would have agreed, will have arrived only when the British market for cosmetics begins drastically to contract.

## Concocting the common good

By Ghita Ionescu

WILLIAM E. CONNOLLY:  
Appearance and Reality in Politics  
218pp. Cambridge University Press.  
£5.  
0 521 23036 8

Naivety can have both an endearing and an irritating effect on those who encounter it, and William Connolly's book, reminiscent of Bentham and Saint-Simon in their popular tracts, is no exception. While the freshness of some of its revelations contrasts pleasantly with the blasé professionalism of much contemporary political literature, the banality of its utopianism is wearisome.

The book seems to have a two-fold aim: to carry out a philosophical inquiry into the politics of industrial society and to work out an intellectual introduction to a new American socialism. The subject of the inquiry, as summed up in the book's attractive title, is broached only after two ponderous introductory chapters. One of these is a long excursus into Althusser's structuralist Marxism, which adds very little to what has already been said so superfluously on that crepuscular school and its obsessive anti-humanism. But, surprisingly, the two works which have previously dealt with the subject, even if in different ways, namely Jacques Ellul's *L'illusion politique* and W. L. MacKenzie's *Political Identity*, are completely ignored.

The author rightly claims that "political theory must pay attention to both the discrepancies and the connections between appearances and realities" - especially in the realm of political consciousness. To substantiate his thesis he ingeniously proposes to submit a form of political self-interpretation, described as "the ideology of sacrifice", to a series of "hypothetical revisions". The ideology is said to be representative of: "typical group of white, married, male blue-collar workers in the United States today", the individual within which "does not see himself as working simply to maximize his family's short-range consumption opportunities. He voluntarily sacrifices now so that his children can escape the circumstances in which he finds himself". If this orientation to work and family is subjected to "the rhetoric of intellectuals, student dissidents, feminists, deviants and criminals", "the ideology of sacrifice" may demonstrate its vulnerability. "The youngest contingent of workers might begin to think that once the ends of productivity, private affluence and leisure are displaced from their overriding position, these practices themselves can be reshaped to create more room for fulfilling social relations, collective consumption, and public deliberation over common areas of concern". Hence "if the problem is seen to be one of public consciousness the point of politics is to change that consciousness".

The trouble here lies in the unrepresentativeness of Connolly's chosen prototype. One would need to be convinced by psephological evidence that the "youngest contingents" of white American workers have defected from the vast Republican majorities in the 1980 elections. For conceptual purposes the example is equivocal. It does not apply to other American social groups: to farmers, tradesmen, organization men, highly skilled workers, scientists, technicians, architects, doctors, nurses, etc. What is negated in "the ideology of sacrifice" is first the pursuit of creativity in one's daily work, which is one of the *raison d'être* of all civilizations - and notably of modern American civilization. This is a stronger motive in life than helping one's children to transcend one's own circumstances. What is also consigned to the realm of trivia in the liberal sense of the word is a contentment with the fruits of one's work. These are the human elements of the ends of productivity and leisure which can hardly be corroded by the theories

of dissident students, intellectuals, feminists and deviants.

The most fragile premiss in Connolly's reasoning is the assertion that "the existential question we periodically pose" (my italics) is "What shall I do? How shall I live my life?" In fact, the existential questions from Socrates to Heidegger are "Who am I? Where am I? Why have I been born? Why should I die? What should I create so that something of me may remain?" This is where a man's authentic identity lies. His social identity is one of the dimensions by which he measures his span of life, but it cannot, to use Pascal's expression, "divert" a man with a live consciousness from the pursuit of the overall meaning of his being.

In the second, and better, part of the book, the author proposes to transform the social concept of the public interest into that of the common good, which, he suggests, should be specially applied "to a variety of political economies" in "representative democracy in advanced capitalism". He rightly argues that while our social life is increasingly politicized, at the same time, principally through the agency of the media, our self-consciousness is becoming correspondingly enlarged.

The common good can be established only if all citizens develop sufficient "civic virtue" (shades of Robespierre!).

Less defensible is the author's claim that the common good may comprise any such collective purpose as: "to serve God, to expand its boundaries and dominate neighbouring populations, to create a civilization of productivity which brings affluence, freedom and leisure to future generations, to support contemplation and scientific inquiry, to maintain conditions of equal citizenship, to define and adjudicate its internal conditions within the frame of a written constitution". The common good thus either dissolves into indifference or is confused with the good old American notion of political consensus. A second objection is that, although Connolly is aware of the fact that our society is too highly politicized, he unhesitatingly asserts that the common good should be achieved through the *politics* of the common good: "The politics of civic virtue, once established, acquires an affirmative momentum of its own. When *civitas* is firmly entrenched, one does not have to be a hero to do one's part. It is enough to be a citizen". But the politics of civic virtue cannot be established without a prior, general, and compulsory politicization of the

Provides us with his circumscribed and liberal version of a socialist politics inspired by the common good (and it is here especially that one is reminded of the utopianism of Bentham and Saint-Simon). He proposes five conditions:

1) "Every adult member must be guaranteed the right to a job with an

income level sufficient to make ends meet." Achieving this happy goal would of course mean that just about every other existing social and economic problem could also be solved.

2) "Educational institutions must be subject less to state control and more to the control of local communities and teachers." But surely such an emphasis on regional interests would lead to the fragmentation of a "common good"?

3) "It is imperative that publishing houses, the press and other media retain some independence from direct state control." Note the capriciousness of "direct state control", and the feebleness of "some".

4) "An independent judiciary with constitutional protection is imperative in a socialist polity as well." But the judiciary itself would be bound indirectly by the prescriptions of the politically defined common good - and directly by state control.

5) "The right of workers to strike must remain in a socialist polity." This is exactly what the Poles were trying to explain to their Communist rulers - only to be told that strikes would destroy planning, which is the required instrument of a politics of the common good.

It is in these contradictory conclusions that the logical weakness of Mr Connolly's hypothesis stands most fully revealed.

## Mistakes of the infallibilious

By David Pearce

T. W. HUTCHISON:  
The Politics and Philosophy of Economics  
Marxians, Keynesians and Austrians  
310pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £15.  
0 631 12517 5

T. W. Hutchison quotes with some affirmation Sir Karl Popper's dictum that "lack of clarity is a sin" in intellectuals. These collected essays cannot be criticized for opaqueness: there is never any question of where the author's sympathies lie in the methodological debate on the role of ideology in economic thinking, nor on just how influential economists are in the world of *realpolitik*.

Most of the antipathy is reserved for Marx, Marxism and its gnostic constructs such as the "ideological

pseudotheory of value and exploitation". While the reference to Marx's own bourgeois style of life seems gratuitous - presumably scientific assessment is determined by an analysis of what is said rather than the conditions under which it is written - Professor Hutchison teases out of the writing of Engels some embarrassing observations for the orthodox Marxian. Certainly, the neglect of Engels's preface to Marx's *The Poverty of Philosophy* tends to suppress the important fact that Engels saw clearly the fallacy in a labour theory of value, while his earlier admission of the "mental element of thought" in work effort implies a fuzziness in the distinction between capital and labour which is familiar to us now, but, Hutchison argues, fatal for the labour theory.

The author's transparent irritation with Marxists, and others, arises from their espousal of "systemological infallibilism", their dogmatic

claim to certitude in a world of uncertainty where what matters is the formulation of propositions that can be empirically tested. Hutchison is thus firmly in the British empirical tradition and this leads him to damn, sometimes mildly, sometimes mercilessly, many who would figure prominently in the history of economic thought. He has little time, for example, for A. C. Pigou, who succeeded Alfred Marshall to the chair of Cambridge in 1908. Like Marshall, Pigou expressed concern for issues of social deprivation and unemployment. His sin, it seems, was an inability to keep wholly normative concerns distinct from his advance of economics as a science. In this, however, Hutchison makes all too much of what he believes to be an exaggeration in the distinction forcibly made by Pigou between private and social cost. In essence, private cost is one that shows up in some one's internal financial accounts, while the social cost of an activity includes not just its private cost but the "external" effects of that activity imposed on other members of society. Pigou was right to stress the distinction. Indeed, if gullt there is lies in the trivial examples of social cost found by Pigou and his subsequent armchair discussants - such as sparks from railway engines setting fire to fields of hay, or noises from the neighbour's hobby-making in the garage. Reference to a strong but still neglected literature on the empirical aspects of social cost will show that what Pigou noted at the conceptual level is pervasive in practice.

By stressing hypothesis-testing and the need to maintain a firm distinction between the positive and the normative, the latter of which might not appeal wholly to modern philosophers who find the dividing line uneasy, Hutchison is led to a second theme, namely that economics has no great claim to generality. It is easier to sympathize here. One persistent comment is that, through their obsession with "equilibrium", economists have never quite explained what exactly it is that equilibrates the system. Be it the supply and demand for beer or the entire macro-economic system. There is thus fairly extensive agreement with the works of the later Hayek (though some stern words for the young Hayek and his mentor, von Mises), especially in his doubts on the comparability of prediction in economic science and in science per se. Even here, one cannot but suggest that anyone seeking that degree of scientific exactness has simply not understood the limits of any social science. The contradiction is analogous to asking that inductive reasoning be, in some way, "like" deductive reasoning. We would not have to resort to imperfect science, or

even the language to describe it, if the perfect science was possible. If this is Hutchison's message it is unexceptional but worth repeating since the unexceptional is not always acknowledged.

As one reads through these essays, with their side-swipes at modern-day economists such as Joan Robinson, Ronald Meek or Maurice Dobb, a further fascinating theme emerges. With the rest of us, Hutchison is in no doubt that a good deal of economic "game", a therapy for its practitioners, is rather like crossword puzzles for those on the 7-50 to Waterloo. But he also doubts if economists have ever exercised the political power attributed to them by others, or, for that matter, by those in their own discipline such as Keynes. The abolition of the Corn Laws, it is suggested, had little to do with the pamphleteers and more to do with what the politically strong actually wanted. Edgeworth was not to blame for progressive income tax - it was the right word; Marshall did not offer the intellectual support for *laissez faire* which, in any event, was crumbling as the franchise was expanded; Pigou gave no real economic case for socialism, and Keynes did not take the 1930s out of depression. Even the West German "miracle" in the postwar years of recovery owes little in terms of historical explanation to the ideas of its apparent intellectual fathers such as Eucken. Hutchison is comparatively silent on the dogma of the past few years and the role of Milton Friedman in Reaganomics and Thatcherism. But one suspects that his historical judgment could be extended. Some convenient, political and economic philosophies just "happened" to be in the wings when ideologies, owing more to simplistic aphorisms than intellectual understanding of the workings of an economy were on stage. Perhaps this extends what Hutchison would wish to say into areas he would dispute, but the temptation is irresistible.

While six of the nine essays in this fascinating volume have been published before, even these are revised. One is struck by the consistency of thought in all of them, so much so that they could well be chapters of a continuous narrative. Anyone disliking the unashamed empiricism and the more than occasional passionate outburst against intellectuals suffering from what Hutchison would regard as ideological blindness will not be at ease with this book. But there is a strong case to answer, and Professor Hutchison has presented it with admirable lucidity and skill. These are essays worth owning and returning to - models of how to write in an age when literate economists are a scarce resource.

## Lenin, Gorky and I

That winter when Lenin and Gorky and I took the ferry from Naples to Capri, nobody looked twice at the three men having a lemon ice in Russian wool suits hard as boards. Behind us, a forgetful green sea, and the Russian snows storming the winter palace. We descended, three men a bit odd, insisting on carrying our own suitcases

heavy with books: Marx, Hegel, Spinoza. We took the funicular up the cliffs of oleander and mimosa; yet through the fumes of our cheap cigars we observed how many travellers had come to Capri with a beauty. Lenin to Gorky, "In Moscow they'd kill on the streets for the girl who showed me my room." Within an hour of our arrival we were sitting in the piazza drinking fizz, longing for the girls strolling by: a mother, a sister, a daughter. You could smell an angelic lilac in their hair. "Love should be like drinking a glass of water. You can tell how good a Bolshevik she is by how clean she keeps her underwear."

It was then I split with the Communist Party. Gorky welcomed the arrival of an old flame from Cracow. Lenin bought white linen trousers but would not risk the Russian Revolution for what he called "a little Italian marmalade." It was I who became the ridiculous figure, hung up in the piazza like a pot of geraniums, not able to do without the touch, taste, and smell of women from those islands in the harbour of Naples.

Stanley Moss



# The business of the brain

By D. M. MacKay

ERICH HARTH:  
Windows on the Mind  
Reflections on the Physical Basis of  
Consciousness  
288pp. New York: Morrow. \$15.  
0 688 0075 1

Books on brain and mind seem apt to reveal more of their authors' ultimate values than do those on other scientific subjects. Erich Harth clearly sets a commendable value on modesty. "I meant the book to be a panorama of facts, views and reflections," he tells us, "and I have made no pretence of presenting a unified or completed picture." He does not mind being somewhat unconvictional, ending his book with an evocative tale of mysticism and superstition whose relevance to the main theme is left largely to the imagination. By contrast, he is also capable of some unremarkable statements as the following: "Brain and mind. Few would contend that one can be human without these"; or "Information is the specialty of our age. It saturates the air. It bounces back from our most distant planet..."

To be honest, the tone of remarks such as these, picked up on my first casual thumb-through, set my expectations rather low; but in the end I developed both respect and affection for the author. Unpretentious he may be, but he has done his

homework; and he has an obvious sympathy for his reader's likely difficulties. Beginning with "A simple-minded view from a distance", his technique is to close in gradually upon the working brain, viewed first as an information-processor, then as a community of neurons in various modes of organized activity. Issues such as "Atomism versus globalism", "Determinism versus randomness", and "Nature versus nurture" are touched on in sufficient detail to make each section a source of worthwhile information. The thorny topics of Perception, Consciousness and Free Will are not shirked, and, a brave, if not altogether convincing, attempt is made to forge a link between consciousness and subatomic physics. Discussion is made easier for the layman by an excellent ten-page glossary.

Inevitably, given the present glut of books on "Brain and Mind", one looks critically at each newcomer. Technically, this one is above average. Despite his obvious debt to secondary sources, Dr Harth has done a workmanlike job of digesting the material he has selected, and I would not hesitate to recommend most of his descriptive sections as a teaching aid. His account of the neurophysiology of the visual system, for example, though speculative in parts, does justice both to those who think of "feature detection" as a function of individual nerve cells and to those who invoke more global cooperative properties of the neural population. He is also up to date in his enthusiasm for new non-invasive

ways of mapping brain function in terms of blood flow, or the differential uptake of chemicals by active neural tissue.

Although the author's focus is on the normal brain - psychiatry is not in the index, nor is the name of Freud - he allows himself quite a wide range. Parapsychology is cogently criticized on methodological grounds. Several pages are devoted to pain ("pain is quintessential awareness"), by way of introduction to an informative section on opiates and opioids. The phenomenon of "blindsight" in patients with damaged visual cortexes is described at some length, and the "split-brain" syndrome has its due place - though oddly enough without any reference to R. W. Sperry, who is cited only for his work on problems of brain growth and development. In this latter connection the author makes much of the thought that "the early work of chance (becomes) essence in the mature brain". The loss of the ability to regenerate nerve cells is the price we mammals have to pay for a brain which is designed to be the repository of a unique selfhood that arises when chance is molded into essence.

There are weak spots here and there. Greek atomism is depicted as wholly deterministic, as if Epicurus had never attempted his cosmic cybernetic steam-engine governor, invented by Wait to regulate the speed of rotation, is twice confused (on pp 56 and 217) with the steam-

pressure safety-valve. To specialist readers, the description of "efficiency copy" theories of voluntary action on pp 143-4 may seem somewhat garbled; and although Harth has intelligent things to say about the cybernetic basis of brain organization, it is a pity that the various flow-maps offered to explain voluntary action do not make more explicit the crucial element of evaluation.

The eight pages devoted to free-will are a tantalizing mixture of perceptive comments and confused argumentation. Classical materialism, with its doctrine that mind is "nothing but the 'mechanical sprouting of a machine'", is dismissed as incompatible with indeterministic modern physics; though we are (rightly) warned not to take physical indeterminism as adding anything to our freedom of will. Against the dualist interactionism of Eccles and Popper, who would locate the mind in a non-physical "World 2", however, Harth argues that "World 2" in its turn, were governed by dynamic rules, would need an infinite regression of "Worlds" to escape determination of our actions at some level or other. When he finally faces the crux question whether, under the circumstances, a chooser could have acted otherwise, he dismisses this as

"an example of... the contraindicated fallacy".

This surely won't do. The question whether my brain could have done otherwise may perhaps be thus ruled out of court; but there is a logical world of difference between asking that, and asking whether or not I could have done otherwise. Harth here shows no awareness of the difference, and so fails to grapple with the real issue raised by mechanistic theories of brain function. If (as I would argue) there is no necessary contradiction in claiming that I could have done otherwise even though (from the non-participant observer's standpoint) my brain could not, then the predictability of our action from brain science or otherwise, is logically irrelevant to the assessment of our freedom and responsibility as agents. The situation is irreducibly relativistic.

Harth is aware of weaknesses in all the philosophical options that tempt him, including the lastly fashionable "brain/mind identity theory". His conclusion is suitably soberminded: "Are we, then, to 'explain' mental phenomena with our enriched collection of physical laws? ... it is much too early to be sure ... The laws are still too confused and the mysteries too deep."

## On the point of going

By J. F. Watkins

MICHAEL R. SABOM:  
Recollections of Death  
A Medical Investigation  
225pp. Harper and Row. £6.95.  
0 06 014995 0

The human ego is, of course, an illusion, the end-result of all the perceptions we have ever had and of their interactions. It must therefore disappear when we die. Although this idea should be obvious it fails to flatter human self-importance and is consequently discarded in favour of the more reassuring notion that there is in our heads a thing which perceives, that is our true self, driving the contraption we call the body. At death this thing, called in religion the soul, must necessarily leave the corpse and float away to an unspecified destination.

There is no doubt at all that those who cling to this belief will in future quote the findings of *Recollections of Death* in support of their arguments, in spite of the fact that the book was not written with that purpose in mind. It is, as its title indicates, an investigation into a curious phenomenon, which has come to notice as a result of the development of medical techniques for the resuscitation of people who have approached the point of death. Some of these (thirty-four out of seventy-eight in the series described in the book) report one or both of two kinds of "Near-Death Experience" or "NDE". In the first type, the "Autoscopic Experience", the typical report states that the patient left his body and took up a position near the ceiling, from where he was able to watch and hear the efforts of the medical team to revive him. In the second type, the "Transcendental Experience", the reports describe bright lights, peaceful sensations, beautiful landscapes, and meetings with dead relatives, and, in one case, with Jesus Christ in person.

There are three possible explanations for these reports: the witnesses were lying, or were deceived; or they actually experienced the phenomena they describe. Michael R. Sabom, a sceptical, intelligent cardiologist, has applied standard scientific and statistical methods to the claims and concludes, quite rightly, that his patients were describing genuine experiences. There are two classes of explanations for these. According to the first, something which we may call the soul left the body for a short period, hesitated about the wisdom of its decision, and returned to the body at the moment when, for example, heart rhythm returned to nor-

mal. If this type of explanation is true we can deduce some of the physico-chemical properties of the soul. It is not subject to gravity, or else it is lighter than air, because it goes preferentially to the ceiling. It has some control over its own movements, possibly by electromagnetic means, because it usually did not go through the ceiling - in some cases it apparently had the option of floating down the highway. It is sensitive to electro-magnetic radiation in at least the visible light range and has a mechanism for interpreting the radiation which bombards it, so that it can "see" events occurring around it. It therefore does not reflect light. A proportion of the incident light must be absorbed, however, to enable it to see, and this absorption should be measurable by sensitive photometers, although it is insufficient to be perceived by the eye. Its sensitivity to sound waves is difficult to reconcile with a non-material structure. There is a paradox in the soul's ability to sense light waves to which the people in the room are insensitive - the so-called "Transcendental Experience". A mathematical, relativistic treatment of the scanty data may possibly show in the novel; and, given some experience of the conventions of the domestic saga and the requirements of soap opera the reader should be ready for every emergency Harrington contrives.

Few artistically self-conscious authors would have the audacity to begin a novel by blending such stereotypes as the whodoe-with-the-heart-of-gold, the brutal overseer, the salt-of-the-earth and the noble savage. Harrington, however, positively basks in the comforting glow of the old routine. In 1896 Cyrus Jenks, a farmer, is passing through rugged land on his way to Idaho Falls. He is a simple man with a basic code of ethics and is startled by a "strange scene". A tall teenager is being brutally whipped by an Orphan Master and the sight is too much for Cyrus, who rides to rescue and takes possession of the distressed boy. Everything about this boy is coded so that the reader will recognize him as the archetypal Noble Savage. Rupert Stroud, who borrows his surname from a fictional cowboy, is all set to grow up into a Man of Destiny. In rescuing him, Cyrus is, unknowingly, acting in the interests of a benevolent Fortune.

As the novel progresses, the personifications and stereotypes continue to appear. Rupert meets John Hatter, the Biblical Patriarch. Naturally, Hatter has a stunningly beautiful daughter, Leah, who looks like an Ice Maiden since she "glowed with a golden vitality that brought to mind... like a goddess". When Rupert breaks the ice it is evident that Leah is a passionate woman.

FICTION

## Siring the wise child

By T. O. Treadwell

RON CARLSON:  
Truants  
255pp. John Murray. £7.50.  
0 195 3917 X

Writers cannot be held responsible for the excesses of their imitators; J. D. Salinger's Holden Caulfield is as funny and touching a character as any in post-war American literature, but thirty years after the publication of *The Catcher in the Rye*, the legion of thoughtless sensitive adolescents of which he is the archetype still marches glumly through the American novel.

Ron Carlson's example of this type is sixteen-year-old Collin Elder. Having lost his mother in a cutely ironic accident in early childhood, Collin has tried desperately to earn the attention and love of his indifferent father by frightening away his girlfriends and setting the house on fire. Not altogether surprisingly, the poor man's patience runs out and, committing his son to an Arizona home for wayward children, he heads for California. The novel opens with

Collin's decision to abscond from his institution and go off in search of his sire.

Translating his decision into action takes up the first third of the novel, and when the break is finally made it comes as the result of accident rather than will. Collin has a summer job shovelling cutely symbolic cow-dung at the Arizona State Fair, and he becomes interested in Louisa Holz, a girl of about his own age who performs a motorcycle high-wire act with her father. An accident on the wire temporarily incapacitates Louisa's dad (also a monster), and she takes the opportunity to run away, trailing Collin in her wake. Louisa, too, is a sensitive soul, a fact Carlson communicates by giving her a colloquial style of speech consisting largely of expletives - another trick traceable to Salinger.

The two waifs find temporary employment at an old people's home, the hellishness of which they transform through their sympathy and warmth. Here they meet Will Clare, a sensitive, wise, and vigorous octogenarian, with whom they set out on a journey through the western states, their engaging sincerity and freshness exposing the selfish-

cunning enough to trap Rupert in marriage. Rupert is accordingly set up on land belonging to Hatter's Castle and expected to get on with the business of producing a family in Hatter's patriarchal image. Rupert's heart, however, is in cement.

As he confides to his saviour, Cyrus, Rupert finds that the soil contains the stuff of his dreams. "Here's iron oxide, and magnesia," he tells Cyrus. "It's the same all over Satan's Gate, and the valley. And clean through the mountains..." It means I'm stuck here, he thinks. But not just any limestone, Cyrus. As near as I can analyze the rock, it's close to perfect for the making of cement." This is indeed the realization of a dream which the author has conveniently transcribed for the reader. It goes like this: Rupert is walking the streets of a town where everyone knows his name. They respect him and speak to him with reverence. It is his "idea of paradise".

Sustained by his discovery (which, admittedly, makes a change from oil) and supported by such men as Peter Collier who has a drinking problem as well as an interest in adultery, Rupert builds his earthly paradise, on a foundation of cement. He not only gets his own way, but opportunity to time but takes every opportunity to have his revenge on those who made his childhood a hell of physical torment and Mormon indoctrination. He is quick with his fists, and the author's set-pieces inevitably involve brutal punch-ups: "Dewey levered his torso up on his elbows, and as his head rose above his shoulders, Rupert struck him a carefully aimed blow to the chin. Dewey's head bounced on the table. He struggled up again, and Rupert hit him again."

In the routine domestic saga, courage always triumphs over adversity, so, as the novel stretches from 1896 to 1954, we watch Rupert get "everything he'd ever wanted, had ever worked for: family, love, a place, security and, above all, a name that was known all over the west." As it just had to happen that way, given the opening, the novel is very readable, a fact which reflects on the expertise of the author and his enthusiasm for the local colour of Idaho and beyond.

*Cities of the Red Night*, according to the publishers "without doubt William Burroughs's most magnificent opus", has recently been reissued in paperback (232pp. John Calder/Rivertrun. £5.95. 0 7145 3816 7). Many of the characters from Burroughs's previous books appear in the novel, which creates a world governed by the "Articles" of the eighteenth-century pirate, Captain Misson.

As the novel progresses, the personifications and stereotypes continue to appear. Rupert meets John Hatter, the Biblical Patriarch. Naturally, Hatter has a stunningly beautiful daughter, Leah, who looks like an Ice Maiden since she "glowed with a golden vitality that brought to mind... like a goddess". When Rupert breaks the ice it is evident that Leah is a passionate woman.

## The stuff of dreams

By Alan Bold

R. E. HARRINGTON:  
Proud Man  
400pp. Secker and Warburg. £7.50.  
0 435 19113 X

The Identikit novel is a work of fiction constructed of features drawn from various sources. R. E. Harrington's fifth book is an accomplished Identikit novel with a little bit of everything: an earthquake, a pandemic, a token alcoholic, a detective from the Pinkerton Agency, a right-cousin, a faithless wife, a positive hero, a left-wing agitator and incidental characters who are either absolutely decent or completely villainous. It is a product that has been processed and packaged for popular consumption, and it comes as no surprise to discover that the author's background is in business. He has worked as a computer systems engineer, has managed a data processing corporation, and has been president of a computer research and development firm. Such organizational ability shows in the novel; and, given some experience of the conventions of the domestic saga and the requirements of soap opera the reader should be ready for every emergency Harrington contrives.

Few artistically self-conscious authors would have the audacity to begin a novel by blending such stereotypes as the whodoe-with-the-heart-of-gold, the brutal overseer, the salt-of-the-earth and the noble savage. Harrington, however, positively basks in the comforting glow of the old routine. In 1896 Cyrus Jenks, a farmer, is passing through rugged land on his way to Idaho Falls. He is a simple man with a basic code of ethics and is startled by a "strange scene". A tall teenager is being brutally whipped by an Orphan Master and the sight is too much for Cyrus, who rides to rescue and takes possession of the distressed boy. Everything about this boy is coded so that the reader will recognize him as the archetypal Noble Savage. Rupert Stroud, who borrows his surname from a fictional cowboy, is all set to grow up into a Man of Destiny. In rescuing him, Cyrus is, unknowingly, acting in the interests of a benevolent Fortune.

As the novel progresses, the personifications and stereotypes continue to appear. Rupert meets John Hatter, the Biblical Patriarch. Naturally, Hatter has a stunningly beautiful daughter, Leah, who looks like an Ice Maiden since she "glowed with a golden vitality that brought to mind... like a goddess". When Rupert breaks the ice it is evident that Leah is a passionate woman.

As the novel progresses, the personifications and stereotypes continue to appear. Rupert meets John Hatter, the Biblical Patriarch. Naturally, Hatter has a stunningly beautiful daughter, Leah, who looks like an Ice Maiden since she "glowed with a golden vitality that brought to mind... like a goddess". When Rupert breaks the ice it is evident that Leah is a passionate woman.

## Jazz and pink gins

By David Montrose

PHILIP ROCK:  
Circles of Time  
309pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £7.95.  
0 340 24658 8

Phillip Rock's last novel, *The Passing Bells*, was a superior and best-selling soap opera: a would-be panoramic account of English society before and during the First World War. An American writing primarily for Americans, Rock provided more *Upstairs, Downstairs* than *Coronation Street*, concentrating on the Greville family, headed by Anthony, ninth Earl of Stanmore. The lower orders were glimpsed as servants and other ranks. Scenes of trench warfare were juxtaposed with country seats and London mansions, hunts and deb balls. Understandably reluctant to part with a winning formula, Rock has now assembled his surviving characters for a confrontation with the early 1920s. "The age of jazz dancing and pink gins."

The story is told in the first person by Collin, whose style combines agonized sensibility with that love of baroque imagery which, at this end of the novel-market, is identified with fine writing; the manner is much valued by connoisseurs of the absurd: "the rain was warm on my skin, and the moment waned over me like a passing tumescence" is perhaps the gem of this volume.

Why does this "wise child" school of fiction remain so popular? Perhaps because of the cosily reassuring optimism that underlies its assumptions. Collin and Louisa have had cruel and lonely childhoods, yet they have come through the experience without having been brutalized - even the salt sand of the desert can nourish sensitive plants. Beneath the callousness and ugliness of American life, the theory runs, the old freshness and honesty are being renewed. The past (octogenarian Will) condemns the unfeeling present, but the future (Collin and Louisa) offers a vision of regeneration.

It is instructive to compare *Truants* with Norman Mailer's *The Executioner's Song*, which shares its western setting. Mailer's characters, too, lead vulnerable and bitter lives in hideous, strip-developed desert towns; many of them have emerged from pasts at least as desolate as Collin's or Louisa's with balance and humour. But the voices of Mailer's characters have no cute precocity to lull us into the feeling that it's all right somehow. Unlike the voices in *Truants*, they are frightened, frightened, and authentic.

As a result, the novel is rich in anti-climax, and many opportunities are missed. The principal character this time round is Martin Rilke, an American nephew of Countess Stanmore. In the opening chapter, Martin learns that he is to be sued for libel, over a book drawing on his recent experiences as a war correspondent, by one Major General Sir

Mettram Dundas Sparrowfield. Hopes of a courtroom drama are raised, only to be dashed: the trial occupies just over two pages. Martin triumphs.

The Earl's younger son, William, is arrested after a raid on a Soho jazz club, during which he damages two policemen. A packet of cocaine is found in his pocket. "Two years in the Scrubs", predicts an Inspector. "We'll get you off with a payment of damages and a stern warning," promises the family solicitor. No anti-climax at this time. The affair is simply never mentioned again.

Equally perfunctory is the treatment of Earl's shock-shocked elder son, Charles, and his widowed daughter, Alexandra. Charles begins the novel in an asylum. After being cured, he takes a teaching post in a progressive school. He is content. The reader knows, because the author tells us, Alexandra becomes engaged to a barrister. Realizing, however, that he is a cardboard cut-out, she jilts him for Jamie Ross, her father's erstwhile chauffeur, now a successful engineer. Jamie is a cardboard cut-out, too, but a more likeable one.

The most substantial part of the novel concerns Martin Rilke's trip to Weimar Germany, where he encounters the fledgling Nazi Party and witnesses Hitler's abortive putsch of 1923. Only here does Rock have more material than he can handle in a novel of this kind. He has a complicity of characters to deploy, all of whom carry their own strands of story-line. So the reader is well into the novel before the entire cast has been introduced. This obligation fulfilled, there is insufficient room for development of personalities or situations.

Elsewhere, the sense of period is attempted mainly through name-dropping and the mentioning of then-current brands of cigarette. Meanwhile, false notes creep in: "night-stick" for "truncheon", a banter reading "HONOR HATCO". If the Grevelles and their satellites are to continue, Rock must recapture his previous touch.

## Leaving no milestone unturned

By Paul Taylor

NICHOLAS MEYER:  
Confessions of a Homing Pigeon  
378pp. Hodder and Stoughton.  
£7.95.  
0 340 27829 3

Even by the low standards of formula writing, this is an embarrassing and gauche performance. It does for the *Bildungsroman* roughly what the work of Jackie Collins does for the novel of sensitive human relationships. And, on occasion, it really involves you in its characters (such as the insidious narrative skill of the author) only to lose you a couple of pages later in a wasteland of arch cultural reference, impossible psychology and wholly misguided knowledge about its own operations.

George Bernini, the half-Italian, half-Jewish son of naturalized American trapeze artists is orphaned in a manner that might be expected of the son of trapeze artists. He is sent from New York to Paris to stay with his uncle Fritz. Fritz, called on to be the lodestone of the entire book, possesses, thanks to the clamorous insistence of Meyer's prose, all the magnetic pull of tin of connoisseurship, and, understandably, under the aching list of mutually incompatible characteristics. Roaring drunkard, brilliant concert pianist, monumental lecher, considerable composer, devotee of philosophy - in short, just the sort of uncle a boy needs and just the sort of character a novel like this cannot persuade you to believe in. In a breathing space between orgies, he composes a symphonic poem: "Inspired, he admitted by existentialism, of all things" called *Equations*, and conducts it "with au-

thority, his precision all the more remarkable because he was quite intoxicated at the time". At least he was conscious, and for that small stab at credibility, much thanks. The swirling Bohemian life through which Fritz careers, accompanied by little George, even into brotherhood with lung cancer, does not so much leap off the page as back away to vanishing point as a result of such descriptions as the following (of their trip to Rome): "Paris were beautiful and parts were fascinating, but overall I was impressed by the long nightmarelike rush of it, the sheer manic intensity that infused the whole enterprise."

Eventually the boy's well-meaning aunt and uncle in Chicago get a court order for custody of him and, numb with sorrow and feeling betrayed by all parties, he is brought back to the States. The section following this is the best in the book. George discovers accidentally why the aunt and uncle are so nice to him - he is the substitute for their own dead son, inadequate at school in all but sport, yet possessed of a strong unacademic intelligence, he finds his position as an outsider thrown into sharp relief when he discovers Larry Haynes (star of the school, its number one "insider") hanging dead from a rope in the school gymnasium, excrement staining his trousers. If Larry was in reality alienated, in what morbid state of alienation does this leave George? Again it is characteristic of him to feel like a substitute, and Meyer is at his most acute in showing how his carefully planned escape back to France and Fritz (some genuinely gripping pages here) is partly a way of allowing Larry to escape, more positively, through him - he would escape his fate through me. I would escape for him as well as myself. He even signs himself Larry Haynes on the docking,

tickets of the Queen Mary, on which he stows away.

The rest of the novel, in which he manages to bed the school beauty (coincidentally also on board) and, back in Paris, to nurse Fritz through to his painful death from lung cancer, has no pretensions to much of any kind. The classic milestone is left unturned. We go lumpishly through masturbation, tentative petting with the opposite sex, resisting the advances of a homosexual, real experiences of love and so on. Typical in its nudging gruesomeness is the episode in which George, preparing for every eventuality on his trip, goes to a barber's shop to buy condoms. "The scene in which the virginal young man purchases his first package of prophylactics has been burlesqued to death in story and film," I have no wish to indulge it here; but I did have my own distinctive style... The spectacle of an author trying to disengage himself wittily from a cliché while burying himself further in it is not an edifying one. In other respects, too, Meyer is expert at wiping the smile from one's face.

On the same level of painfulness are the ordeals by cultural reference that the reader is forced to endure. Describing Fritz's piano-playing, "George invokes the memory of Dinu Lipatti's last recital, at Besancon which had 'the same feeling of incandescent purity' and 'represents almost as though Lipatti were playing under the influence of some powerful narcotic, which come to think of it, in his condition he may well have been'". The monstrous bad taste which lurks in the last part of that sentence is symptomatic of the shaky grip on humour which vitiates almost every page of this interminably involving book.

## More lives than one

By Keith McCulloch

IAN WILSON:  
Mind Out of Time?  
Reincarnation Investigated  
238pp. Gollancz. £6.95.  
0 575 02968 4

Ian Wilson, a historian by training, has already published a best-selling study of *The Turin Shroud*. In *Mind Out of Time?* he turns his attention to the evidence for reincarnation. He leaves out of account cases which are either poorly recorded (such as Dr Gurdham's otherwise remarkable Cathars) or admit of a less mysterious explanation (such as that of the Pollock twins, and many of those recorded by Professor Ian Stevenson in the US - although he is loath to contradict one of the few scientific investigators in the field).

Spontaneous "recollection" of past lives is a rare phenomenon. Most reports, while patently sincere, can be shown not to be genuine. But Wilson concludes that the identification of A. J. Stewart with James IV of Scotland is one of the few really persuasive pieces of evidence for reincarnation. It is unfortunate that he fails to make clear why he finds it so impressive; off-setting the many weaknesses of Stewart's case with no more than the observation that the historian Caroline Bingham finds Stewart's explanation of why she had the huge ship *The Great Michael* constructed (something which would be a real contribution to history if it were true), "by no means inconceivable." But what has made an investigation into reincarnation desirable is a recent growth of interest (stimulated by a number of television programmes both factual and fictional) in hypnotic regression.

Even a sceptic, if he belongs to the ten per cent who are capable of a deep hypnotic trance, can be regressed back through his life and apparently beyond his birth, and will identify involuntarily with a "historical" person, speaking in an accent, and of people and events, which he will find, on waking and listening to a recording of his performance, quite alien. It is not surprising that this should lead to subjective conviction. However, statements made under questioning are sometimes obviously

false (as when a contemporary of "Ramesses III" speaks of a sestertius); while sometimes they are too well known to convince an objective observer. Wilson's skills as a historian are needed for checking statements which are both recondite and checkable. In the few crucial cases in which the records allow us positively to confirm or deny that the personality in question existed, Wilson shows that it can be proven not to have existed.

The important question remains: what mechanism will account for this extraordinary phenomenon? A clue is given by the case of "Joan, the Chelmsford Witch". She confidently gave the date of her trial as 1556; Wilson shows that it actually took place in 1566, but that the former date had gained currency owing to a misprint in the only reproduction of the unique source for the trial. This makes it overwhelmingly likely that the subject was unknowingly basing her characterization on material read or heard in the normal way but "forgotten". One thing hypnotism does show is that we retain many of the things which have entered our consciousness (even if only marginally), but which we cannot recall at will. In fact a number of studies which Wilson collects here show so surprisingly and conclusively that the basis of the apparent memory of a past life is long-forgotten reading (usually of

historical novels) that it would be a rash and glib reader who persisted in believing that any case could be explained only on the hypothesis of reincarnation. Wilson now turns to psychology (and the expertise of his wife) for an explanation of the apparently superhuman "intuition" and dramatic power which builds, on the foundation of the forgotten reading, a performance which can deceive the performer himself. He appeals to a catalogue of psychological phenomena - multiple personality, stigmata, "divided consciousness" - and shows that they provide parallels for the distinctive features of apparent experiences of remembering past lives.

One could complain that in spite of his refreshingly "scientific" approach Ian Wilson has not avoided two of the annoying failings of the occultists, namely filling logical cracks with a slippery paste of particles like "arguably" and "no doubt", and reliance on a rag-bag of disparate authorities and phenomena as accomplices after the fact. However, he more than compensates for these faults with a brace of virtues. He shows us at last to reject out of hand the appeal of the enlightened, that we "at least keep an open mind" and in the process collects a vast number of fascinating case-histories.

## Fugue

by the time you read this  
I'll be gone  
and you'll be sorry

I won't slash my wrists  
and let myself flow  
into the bath

I won't put my head in the gas oven

I won't poke a scatter gun  
in my mouth  
and yank my big toe

I won't go out in a blaze of glory

but by the time you read this,  
I'll have moved on  
and you'll all be sorry

Paul Muldoon



# Dictating to Europe

By F. L. Carsten

EDWARD CRANKSHAW:  
Bismarck  
451pp. Macmillan. £9.95.  
0 333 18364 9

In 1875 Queen Victoria wrote to her eldest daughter, the Crown Princess of Germany:

But Bismarck is a terrible man, and he makes Germany greatly disliked; indeed no one will stand the overbearing insolent way in which he acts and treats other nations, Belgium for instance. You know the Prussians are not popular unfortunately, and no one will tolerate any power wishing to dictate to all Europe.

Some years later the Crown Princess informed her mother:

as you cannot gather grapes of thorns or figs from thistles, so can you not expect from him [Bismarck] that which modern Germany lacks and which it thirsts for, and that is peace among its classes, races, religions and parties, good and friendly relations with its neighbours, liberty and the respect of right instead of force, and the protection of the weak against the oppression of the strong.

These remarks (not quoted by Edward Crankshaw) could serve as the leitmotif of this new biography of the man who is, probably rightly, believed to have been Germany's greatest statesman, the man who won German unity through "iron and blood", and thereafter for twenty more years became the arbiter of Europe.

In contrast with the much shorter books on Bismarck written some twenty years ago by A. J. P. Taylor and W. N. Medlicott, Mr Crankshaw's biography tells the reader comparatively little about Bismarck's personality, and much more about his hatreds and obsessions, his illnesses and the state of his nerves, his gross appetite, and what the author calls his "paranoid fixation" his "madness" and "paranoia". The whole book is liberally sprinkled with such assessments: quite clearly Mr Crankshaw considers them the

key to an interpretation of the Bismarck phenomenon. No one will deny that these traits are important for an understanding of Bismarck the man, but they tell us precious little about his achievements or about the conditions that made these achievements possible. There is virtually nothing about the great social forces which enabled the German drive for unity to gather momentum and finally to succeed, no explanation of the causes of the collapse of the liberal opposition to Bismarck, no analysis of the forces supporting Bismarck and those ranged against him, and none of the structure of Bismarck's Germany.

Instead, not only Bismarck himself, but also his opponents, the socialist leader Ferdinand Lassalle, are labelled "adventurers", and later on for good measure Benjamin Disraeli too. Bismarck is called a "semi-Bonapartist dictator", on the basis of a note by Engels written in 1866, and the German Empire "a Bonapartist state". Again, there is no explanation of what this means, and, as it seems, no awareness that this problem has been endlessly argued about in recent years by German historians. The great Prussian victory over Austria at Sadowna too is seen in terms of the failure of the high command; the success of Prussia was a success of the high command. "No doubt the military genius of Moltke mattered a great deal for the success of Prussia, but so did other factors, for example the dense railway network on the Prussian side which enormously facilitated mobilization and transport, and on the opposite side the chronic financial difficulties which starved the Austrian army of vital new weapons and held back railway construction.

This is not to deny that Mr Crankshaw has written a very readable book, full of personal details, which no doubt will be enjoyed by many. He also has very many apt quotations, not only from Bismarck's own works and correspondence, but also from many of his contemporaries, his admirers as well as his enemies, with the critics and enemies in the majority. The reader will easily remember many a quotation. Thus, when Britain used the Balkan crisis of 1878 to annex the island of Cyprus, Bismarck declared: "You have done a wise thing. That is progress." Whereupon Disraeli observed: "His idea of progress was evidently seizing something." Indeed, on his road to German unification Bismarck seized not only the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, but also the principalities of Hanover, Hesse-Cassel and Nassau and the Free City of Frankfurt which he treated abominably. Five years later he seized Alsace and Lorraine: "progress" was clearly achieved. Germany became the preponderant power on the Continent.

World War "was very largely a less direct consequence of Bismarck's Austro-German Alliance of 1879". This, however, was a defensive alliance which only obliged the powers to aid each other if one of them were attacked by Russia. Implicitly it was also meant to prevent an attack by either power on Russia, and thus the prevention of war, not his provocation (that happened in 1914 with the ultimatum to Serbia for which Austria received German backing). More serious perhaps was Bismarck's failure to inform and to consult with parliament on issues of foreign policy, which he conducted entirely on his own. On the other hand, in contrast with his successors, Bismarck was able to control the army leaders and never allowed them the political influence which they gained in the twentieth century.

Mr Crankshaw repeats the error of some other writers and speaks of Bismarck as a Pomeranian Junker, which he was not: the ancient Bismarck family estates - Burgstall as well as Schönhausen - were situated very close to the Elbe, in the Old Mark of Brandenburg. Nor was Schönhausen later "swallowed up in Poland"; today it belongs to the German Democratic Republic. Although he has previously written on the Habsburg as well as the Romanov dynasty the author often gets the dynastic family relationships wrong. Francis Joseph's mother Sophia was not the daughter-in-law of the previous Emperor, Ferdinand; nor was the young Alexander II of Russia the uncle of the old King William I of Prussia, but (as stated later) it was the other way round. These are small points. But there are instances where far-reaching conclusions are drawn from the wrong election figures. In 1871 the National Liberals did not obtain 220 seats in the Reichstag (an absolute majority) but 99 and thus they did not gain an electoral victory. Nor did the left-liberal *Frischling* obtain 106 seats in the election of 1884, but only 67: in both cases, the forces opposed to Bismarck were much weaker than assumed. What Bismarck founded in 1871 was the second German Empire, not the first, because the Holy Roman Empire has always been called the first, so that the National Socialists were later able to boast of having established their Third Reich.

The list of errors could easily be prolonged; but what is questionable too is Mr Crankshaw's assessment of historical events, his perspective, and on this different opinions can of course be held. For example, he states that the outbreak of the First

World War "was very largely a less direct consequence of Bismarck's Austro-German Alliance of 1879". This, however, was a defensive alliance which only obliged the powers to aid each other if one of them were attacked by Russia. Implicitly it was also meant to prevent an attack by either power on Russia, and thus the prevention of war, not his provocation (that happened in 1914 with the ultimatum to Serbia for which Austria received German backing). More serious perhaps was Bismarck's failure to inform and to consult with parliament on issues of foreign policy, which he conducted entirely on his own. On the other hand, in contrast with his successors, Bismarck was able to control the army leaders and never allowed them the political influence which they gained in the twentieth century.

Kaiser William II is held responsible "for the disaster which swept away his dynasty in 1918" - an arguable point, for the German military must surely share the responsibility - a disaster "which led to the dismemberment of the Reich itself in 1945". I must confess that I cannot see the causal connection between these two events, the collapse of the second and of the third German Reich. If any single person was responsible for the latter, it was Adolf Hitler, and not the Kaiser, who was deposed from Germany in November 1918 and died a peaceful death in his Dutch exile.

How difficult it still is to judge the historical importance and the achievement of Bismarck, Lothar Gall has shown recently in his *Bismarck - the White Revolutionary*. Bismarck's great achievement, German unity, has been ruined by the outcome of the Second World War. Today there are two Germanies. Responsibility for this result may be attributed to Hitler, or to the German military caste, or to the victorious Allies with their policy of establishing zones of influence, but hardly to Bismarck or to William II. Whatever Bismarck's personal failings were, and no doubt there were many and very serious ones, it is a rather simplistic view of history to overstate the damage inflicted upon Germany by one man, and by one man alone.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Writers

GRAHAM STOREY:  
A Preface to Hopkins  
150pp. Longman. £3.25.  
0 582 35252 5

The strength of the Longman Preface series is its presentation of a wide variety of materials within a single, brief, unimpeachable volume. This book, written by the editor of Hopkins's journals, is well peppered with photographs of Hopkins's family and of significant locations in the poet's life. Manuscripts are reproduced, as are Hopkins's favourite pictures and even some of the poems themselves are included. The most welcome items are a pair of Hopkins's own furious and intent sketches from nature, but the least useful is surely his family tree. (Are we supposed to think that poetry is hereditary?) The book's main text has three parts: a short life, some sound criticism and a "reference" section.

It is a wholesome educational salad for undergraduates who want to pass their exams without attending their lectures and for publishers who, in these uncertain times, might value a safely saleable commodity. Hopkins, who was hardly the most prolific of authors and whose reputation and role in literary history are now quite stable, fits snugly into place.

L.M.

R.B.

THOMAS DANIEL YOUNG:  
The Past in the Present:  
A Thematic Study of Modern Southern Fiction  
189pp. Louisiana State University Press. £8.95.  
0 8071 0765 9

453pp. \$5. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Some previously unpublished late essays on the theory of anthropology and sociology, George Eliot's only personal appearance in this publication, are less thought-provoking than much else here. The underlying theme of the compilation is the many-sidedness of her genius: the contributors show George Eliot in relation to the eighteenth-century woman's novel, feminist consciousness (a rewarding piece by Elaine Showalter), politics, and positivists who were her contemporaries (Martha S. Vogeler handles the latter informatively). G. Robert Stange explores her voices as an essayist and the relation of these voices to the authorial tone in the novels, which Margaret Anne Doody sees as the culmination of a traditional female fiction. Chapter 85 of *Middlemarch* is closely examined by Barbara Hardy, J. Hillis Miller and Richard Polier.

The article which comes nearest to the celebration proposed overall is Catherine Gallagher's "The Failure of Realism: *Felix Holt*". This explores the moral and literary tensions between the realist novelist's faith in the scrutability of appearances and Felix's rejection of such a vision.

The basis of realism is thus shown to be put into question in the novel, which is proposed as a distinct step towards the self-consciousness of modernism. This approach is rewarding and cheering, as it makes George Eliot more clearly a writer than do the other contributors with their centripetal tendencies. However, anyone concerned with George Eliot will want to refer to the whole of this collection.

L.M.

BURTON PIKE:  
The Image of the City in Modern Literature  
168pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press. £10.50.  
0 691 06488 1

Newborne's phrase "paved solitude" sounds continuously through this ambitious book. Burton Pike's argument starts from the ambiguity of the city's image throughout its history. "In Genesis, the first city, founded in Cain, and this moral

shadowing haunts the city through literature. Pike is interesting about Freud's image of the mind as a city which contains the evidence of its earliest times, and argues that if we follow Freud in accepting that the city is "the most intense locus of culture within a given civilization, then we could apply to the city Freud's points about conflict, guilt, the function of the superego, and neurosis as factors in the development of civilization". As man advances through the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, so his increasing consciousness of flux is mirrored in the breakdown of the fictional city, where he is increasingly lonely in a mass world. In *Our Mutual Friend*, for instance, the city is constantly threatening to turn Freud's metaphorical ideal on its head, and to announce that where ego is, id shall be - again.

Pike moves fast over a wide terrain: Pausanias, Wordsworth, Balzac, Musil, Baudelaire, Whitman, Dostoevsky and Calvino are among the many writers discussed. The argument overall is essentially psychoanalytic, but Pike continually turns aside to take pleasure in detail. This book reads well, but its thesis cannot be proven in so short a space; it succeeds as an incidentally provocative essay rather than as a definitive work.

L.M.

THOMAS DANIEL YOUNG:  
The Past in the Present:  
A Thematic Study of Modern Southern Fiction  
189pp. Louisiana State University Press. £8.95.  
0 8071 0765 9

"All of the works of fiction included in this book, and my discussions of those works, are intended to serve one purpose: to demonstrate the validity of my thesis," Thomas Daniel Young's preface concludes. I found no short stories or novels "included" in the book, though a variety were discussed (the writers covered are Faulkner, Tate, Warren, Eudora Welty, Flannery O'Connor, Walker Percy and John Barth). The argument is conducted by close reading and by repetitive quotation of Ransom and Tate as authorities on the Southern mind and the modern world. No attempt is made to put these authorities in context. What we have here is a sympathetic, belated Southern romantic who finds his prejudices confirmed by everything he reads, but one so possessive of his culture that he confuses syntactically his own and his subjects' intentions. His thesis, that the modern world has lost a necessary aesthetic or ritual component of life, we have heard before, and whether or not it is "valid" will be determined by writers with wider, more modesty and reference, rather more modesty and feeling for the nuances and implications of their own language.

L.M.

SHERMAN PAUL:  
The Lost America of Love  
Rereading Robert Creeley, Edward Dorn, and Robert Duncan  
276pp. Louisiana State University Press. £12.20.  
0 8071 0865 0

Sherman Paul has had the idea of sitting down to reread the works of three poets he particularly admires and making a book of the notes he took on what occurred to him about their work and their relations with one another as he read. He implicitly proposes a new critical procedure: the critic, instead of organizing his response into an argument, submits control to the texts he is studying, demoting his own work to a running commentary or gloss. The results are disappointing.

Edward Dorn emerges as by far the most interesting author studied. This is partly because his poetry contains ideas about history and politics, which are susceptible to argument; Creeley's coative inwardness and

## short notices

### Adventurers

JAN READ:  
The New Conquistadors  
175pp. Evans. £7.95.  
0 237 45516 1

Jan Read's avowed aim is to describe one aspect of the "liberation" of South America in the early nineteenth century - the part played by British volunteers and mercenaries in wresting that rich but chaotic continent from the rule of Spain and Portugal. The Liberationists run the gamut from the wholly selfless and heroic idealist, from the farrago of errant adventurers emerge men like "Admiral" William Brown, an orphan who made good before the mast; the giant Irishman John O'Brien, who, at the loss of half the advance guard, cleared the snow-deep path ahead for San Martin's celebrated passage through the Andes; and the selfless General William Miller of Chilean and Peruvian fame.

Such a subject largely writes itself; Mr Read provides a succinct and easy account, and is careful to avoid exploiting the frequently sensational material. But, unfortunately, he gives too scant an explanation of the historical background and, determined to be brief, fails to provide adequate biographical sketches of the main characters.

Mr Read is evidently eager to revive the close links which existed between Britain and the emerging South American republics at their birth, and his book, though slight, may help to arouse interest in that now explosively developing continent.

A.M.R.

N.S.

## TLS subscriptions

### NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES

The following postal zones are listed for your convenience. If your country is not included, please contact your local postal authority to ascertain your correct zone as specified by the British Post Office.

United Kingdom only by surface mail.  
6 months (26 issues) £12.50 - 12 months (52 issues) £25.00.  
British Postal Zone 'A' including Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.  
6 months (26 issues) £23.40 - 12 months (52 issues) £46.80.  
British Postal Zone 'B' including Argentina, Bermuda, Brazil, Hong Kong, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Zambia, Zimbabwe.  
6 months (26 issues) £26.52 - 12 months (52 issues) £53.04.  
British Postal Zone 'C' including Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Taiwan.  
6 months (26 issues) £29.12 - 12 months (52 issues) £58.24.  
Europe including Cyprus, Gibraltar, Malta.  
6 months (26 issues) £20.80 - 12 months (52 issues) £41.60.  
By Air Freight, USA and Canada only £35.00 - \$70.00.  
(US dollars only) per annum.

Please send me *The Times Literary Supplement*  
☐ 6 months ☐ 12 months  
Please print  
NAME  
ADDRESS  
I enclose my cheque for £/ \$ made payable to Times Newspapers Ltd  
Signature  
Date  
Return this coupon to Times Newspapers Ltd, Supplement Subscription Manager, Oakfield House, 35 Perryman Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 3DH.

A.M.R.

كتاب في الأصل

### Gail Godwin

A MOTHER AND TWO DAUGHTERS  
"This is modern fiction at its best, intelligent, civilised, highly entertaining writing that has heart and something rewarding to say."  
Birmingham Post

Judith Burnley  
UNREPENTANT WOMEN  
"artfully structured, accessible tale... a clever, quizzical and careful piece of writing..."  
New Statesman

Elizabeth Berridge  
PEOPLE AT PLAY  
Author of Family Matters  
"Her wry, sly, ironic awareness has never been shown to greater advantage."  
The Spectator

Robert Watson  
RUMOURS OF FULFILMENT  
Author of Events Beyond The Heartlands  
"imaginative, it has an unusual vision and there is real, unselfconscious talent here."  
The Guardian

Mary Hobson  
POOR TOM  
Author of Oh Lily  
"Mary Hobson's gift for the blackly humorous is highly individual..."  
Times Literary Supplement

Penelope Lively  
NEXT TO NATURE, ART  
"She is indeed marvellously accurate, catching again and again with perfection the nuances of England and the English today."  
Sunday Telegraph

Heinemann

## Spying on the royals

By Georgina Battiscombe

ANDREW SINCLAIR:  
The Other Victoria  
The Princess Royal and the Great Game of Europe  
282pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £10.  
0 297 77987 7

ROGER FULFORD (Editor):  
Beloved Mama  
Private Correspondence of Queen Victoria and the German Crown Princesses 1878-1885  
209pp. Evans. £10.95  
0 237 44997 8

The *Other Victoria* is in one respect surely unique. Has there been another book in which the writer of the foreword in this case Prince Wolfgang of Hesse, openly takes issue with the author not over a point of detail but over his main thesis? Prince Wolfgang believes that Andrew Sinclair is mistaken in presenting the marriage between the Crown Prince of Prussia and Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, "Vicky", the Princess Royal, as "an extraordinary event whose main purpose was to place a political agent and spy at the heart of the Prussian Court, a deliberate move in the 'great game' of Europe. Interesting and even absorbing though this book may be, by the time he reaches the last page the reader will almost certainly find himself agreeing with Prince Wolfgang.

Because royal marriages are con-

stantly in the limelight it is fatally easy to over-estimate their real importance. "The extended Royal Family was greater than the national state", writes Sinclair. "This was the secret behind the long peace and the short wars which kept the great powers of Europe roughly in equilibrium between the fall of Napoleon and the outbreak of the First World War." He sees Queen Victoria as a benevolent spider sitting at the centre of a huge web of relatives stretched right across the map of Europe, a tireless letter-writer whose family correspondence "provided her with better intelligence than her changing Foreign Secretaries ever had". Thus equipped, she became a powerful force, outwitting politicians and circumventing national movements. The existence of this royal network is not in doubt, nor its importance as a source of intelligence. But was it created deliberately, as Sinclair believes, and had it any decisive influence on the course of history? The evidence seems to point in the contrary direction.

You cannot have it both ways. On page 189 Sinclair refers to "Queen Victoria's preference for a love-match". A marriage which believes in love-matches does not arrange her children's marriages with a view to providing herself with agents and spies at the various European Courts. The Princess Royal's marriage was an arranged affair with political overtones; but although her parents certainly believed that this match would provide a means of furthering the Prince Consort's Utopian dream of a liberalized Prussia at

the head of a united Germany, on personal grounds they considered the Crown Prince Frederick an excellent husband for their daughter, and they would not have continued with their plan had not the two young people fallen genuinely in love. Of Queen Victoria's other daughters, Alice married the Grand Duke of Hesse, a person of great importance in European politics, while the remaining three spent all their lives in England: Louise married to the son of a Scottish Duke, Helena and Beatrice to insignificant princelings. No trace here of deliberate political intention and nothing of what Sinclair describes as "the diplomacy of gold band" - presumably the wedding-ring - and blood royal.

The marriages of Queen Victoria's sons go to prove that family ties have a minimal influence on foreign politics. The match which Vicky, now Crown Princess, and Queen Victoria arranged between the Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra of Denmark, ran clean counter to the family's pro-Prussian policy and did nothing to improve the relationship between Prussia and Denmark or to prevent the outbreak of war. Alfred's choice of the unpopular daughter of a Russian Archduke had no influence on Anglo-Russian relations, and the marriages of Leopold and Arthur were obviously of no political significance.

In his foreword, Prince Wolfgang points out that the voluminous correspondence between Queen Victoria and the Crown Princess does not bear out Sinclair's theory, the chief emphasis in these letters being on

domestic and social matters. *Beloved Mama*, the fifth volume of Sir Roger Fulford's valuable edition of this correspondence, confirms this view. The predominance of the personal over the political is very marked, though it must be remembered that this impeccably-edited edition is a selection rather than a complete collection, and that the period covered by the fifth volume was not one of great political excitement.

What emerges most clearly from these letters is the personality of the Crown Princess. Here is a woman of integrity and intellectual force, someone who cannot dissemble - as is clear from her letter on the death of John Brown - but someone who has learnt in a hard school to keep her naturally strong emotions under rigid control. Her life has the shape of tragedy: blow after blow falls upon her, hope after hope comes to nothing. She is a character who commands pity and respect.

Already there have been several biographies of this good and unhappy woman. Given his own qualifications as a historian, and also the amount of material at his disposal - both to the Royal Archives at Windsor and to the collection of papers at Kronberg - perhaps it is a pity that Andrew Sinclair did not choose to add to their number rather than devote his book to the exposition of a somewhat untenable theory. He has a great eye for character, and although his conclusions may be dubious, it is impossible not to enjoy a book at once so informative and so readable.